

Winter 2018-2019 Edition

The 411 Newsletter

A Holland Police Department

Informational Publication

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Stolen Vehicles

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Department

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Vehicles Stolen in Holland

Holland: In the very early morning hours on Thanksgiving thieves struck the town breaking into 21 vehicles and stealing 3. Police received calls from residents as they awoke to find that their vehicles were ruminated through and in some cases items were stolen.

Thieves also struck the Town of Wales during the same time frame. Wales had a total of 9 vehicles broken into and the crimes in the 2 towns likely occurred sometime between midnight and 5A.M. on November 22nd.

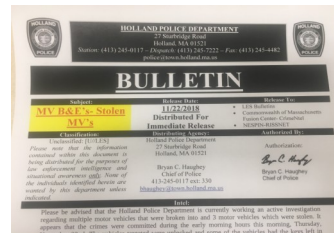
Only 1 of the 3 vehicles stolen from Holland was recovered. Police recovered a

2015 Nissan Altima that was abandoned on Lake Shore Dr sometime during the early morning hours. The vehicle was stolen from a

Ford Explorer was stolen from a residence on Lake Shore Dr as well. Neither vehicle has been recovered as of yet.

All vehicles that were broken into were left unlocked and at least 2 of the 3 vehicles stolen had the keys left in them. Items stolen ranged from wallets, cash and change to small electronics and personal items. One individual also had credit cards stolen which were later utilized in Willington CT.

Police believe the incidents in Holland and Wales are the work of the same individuals and the investigation is ongoing.



Holland Police Department Stolen Vehicle Bulletin.

residence on Old County Rd. Also stolen from a residence on Old County Rd during the same time frame was a gray 2013 Acura TL. A gray 2015

Ice Safety

The Hamilton Reservoir and Lake Siog / Holland Pond is often utilized for winter recreation.

Many of our residents and visitors enjoy ice fishing, skating, and snowmobiling on our lakes during the cold months.

Although ice may appear safe, there really are no guarantees that it actually is. According to MassWildlife, you can not judge ice conditions by appearance or thickness alone. Many other factors like water depth, size of waterbody, water chemistry,

currents, snow cover, age of ice, and local weather conditions impact ice strength.

Always consider ice to be potentially dangerous and continue to check ice conditions frequently before you venture out.

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White ice or snow ice is only about half as strong as new clear ice and can be very treacherous.

Use an ice chisel, auger, or cordless drill to make a hole in the ice and determine its thickness and condition.

Bring a tape measure to check ice thickness at regular intervals.

New Ice is Stronger than Old Ice

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Ice does not freeze uniformly and new ice is stronger than old ice. 4 inches of clear, newly formed ice may support one person on foot, while a foot or more of old, partially thawed ice may not.

avoid traveling onto ice-bound rivers and streams, as the currents make ice thickness unpredictable. Also, lakes and ponds may contain spring holes and other areas of currents that can create deceptively dangerous thin spots. Ice formed over flowing water and currents is often more dangerous.

Be aware of snow covered ice. Snow can insulate and keep it strong but can also insulate it from freezing. Snow can also hide cracks as well as weak and open ice.

Slush is also a danger sign which indicates that the ice is no longer freezing from the bottom. This could mean that the ice is weak or deteriorating.

MassWildlife recommends to:

Be prepared. Carry a cell phone in case of emergency. Always carry ice picks and rope with you on the ice. In case of emergency, drive the nails into the ice and pull yourself to safety while kicking.

Before heading out onto the ice tell someone your plans. Including where you are going and when you expect to return.

Wear your life jacket. If you fall in, a life jacket will keep you at the surface and can provide insulation against the effects of cold water.

If you fall in:

Don't panic. Call for help if there are people nearby.

Don't remove winter clothing. Air trapped in your clothes can provide warmth and help you float.

Turn the direction you came from. Ice you previously walked on should be the safest.

Place your hands and arms on an unbroken surface and kick your legs. If you have ice picks or a pair of nails, use them to pull yourself up onto the ice while kicking.

Lie flat and roll away. Once your torso is on firm ice, roll toward thicker ice to distribute your weight.

Find shelter and get warm. Change out of wet clothing and find warm, dry coverings. If you are in a remote area, get to or start a campfire. Otherwise, get to a car or house. Seek medical advice from your physician on medical attention.

If someone else falls in:

Remember the phrase "Preach-Reach-Throw-Go".

Preach. Call 911 if you can. Shout to the victim to reassure them help is on the way.

Reach. If you can safely reach them from shore, extend an object like a rope, jumper cables, tree branch, or ladder to them.

Throw. Toss one end of a rope or something that will float to the victim.

Go. If the situation is too dangerous for you to perform a rescue, call 911 or go to find help. Untrained rescuers can become victims themselves.

If a pet falls in:

Do not attempt to rescue the pet, go find help. Well meaning pet owners can easily become victims themselves when trying to assist their pets. Remember to always keep pets leashed while walking on or near ice.

Guidelines for clear, blue ice on lakes and ponds. If ice is 2 Inches or less it is recommended to completely **STAY OFF.**

If ice is at least 4 Inches ice fishing and other activities on foot are safe. Ice should be at least 5 Inches to safely operate a Snowmobile or ATV.

Police Recommend Locking your Vehicle

Officials are urging the public to lock their vehicles while unattended. On Thanksgiving morning 21 vehicles were broken into and 3 vehicles were stolen in Holland.

Holland Police are working a joint investigation with the Massachusetts State Police and the Wales Police. **THE TOWN OF WALES EXPERIENCED 9 VEHICLES BROKEN INTO DURING THE SAME TIME FRAME.** Investigators believe that the crimes may

have been committed by a group of individuals based out of the Connecticut area. These individuals are known to systematically target unlocked vehicles, mainly looking for cash, change, credit cards and small electronics.

It is believed that all the vehicles broken into were unlocked at the time of the incident and at least 2 of the 3 vehicles stolen had the keys left in them.

Police are recommending that the public take precautions to safeguard their property by locking doors and closing all windows in their vehicles when left unattended, especially when parked overnight.

Police are also recommending to remove loose change, cash, wallets, pocket books and credit cards from vehicles when unattended as well as removing all keys.

Also, If you carry a key fob do not leave it in your vehicle and be sure to place it a distance away from your vehicle when in your home. Some models have a range where the vehicle can still start and run even if in close proximity to the vehicle.



Police would also like residents to consider installing proper lighting around their property if needed. Motion detecting lights are a deterrent to criminals.

As always the Holland Police is encouraging the public to report any and all suspicious activity witnessed.

Officers would much rather be called for a situation that in the end is legitimate than not be called at all.

Protect yourself against CO Poisoning

As winter is upon us so is the increased danger of Carbon Monoxide poisoning. According to the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, (DFS), CO is the number one cause of poisoning deaths in the U.S.

Hundreds of people die accidentally each year from CO poisoning caused by malfunctioning or improperly used fuel-burning appliances. Learn to protect your family from CO. Carbon monoxide gas is produced whenever any fuel (gas, oil, kerosene, wood or charcoal) is burned.

Carbon monoxide is poisonous, odorless, colorless, and tasteless. Exposure to carbon monoxide can produce headache, nausea, dizziness, confusion, fainting, unconsciousness, and death. CO poisoning can also mimic flu symptoms.

If you suspect CO exposure get out of the house or car and get fresh air. Call 911 from your cell phone or a neighbor's house. If you have symptoms, seek medical help immediately.

Scams Target Seniors

Financial exploitation is a crime in Massachusetts if perpetrated upon an elderly person. According to the National Council on Aging, (NCOA), scams targeting seniors have become so prevalent that they're now considered the crime of the 21st century.

Financial scams often go unreported or can be difficult to prosecute so they are considered a low risk crime. These crimes can be devastating to many older adults and can leave them in a very vulnerable position with little time to recoup their losses.

Some signs of potential elder financial abuse can be:

- Unusual account activity, such as large cash withdrawals or an increase in ATM transactions.
- Inability to explain the unusual account activity.
- Increased confusion about banking and financial issues.
- Adding a co-signer to the elder's account.
- Unexpected interest from a third party in the elder's financial affairs.
- Attempts by a third party to access the elder's account(s) or make withdrawals.
- Request to notarize forms the elder does not understand when asked.
- Explanation of a deal that sounds "too good to be true," or online solicitation.

There are many scams targeting our seniors today and scammers use a variety of different avenues including emails and phone calls. Some recent scams involve Medicare and health insurance, counterfeit prescriptions, fake accident ploys, fake charities, reverse mortgages, sweepstakes, investment schemes and IRS scams to name a few.

It is recommended not to give out personal information over the phone or via email unless you are certain the person contacting you is legitimate.

Holland Outreach Coordinator

Joins Stop Abuse Today, Inc

Stop Abuse Today, Inc is pleased to announce that it has appointed Town of Holland Outreach Coordinator Jennifer Mott to the Executive Committee of Officers. Stop Abuse Today, Inc is a 501 c 3 non profit whose primary purpose is to provide support for abuse victims as well as to provide the public with education and awareness related to abuse prevention. The group currently focuses on domestic abuse, elder abuse and bullying among our youth.



The committee is charged with overseeing all aspects of the organization and Jennifer assumed her role as Treasurer in October. Jennifer joins Sarah Zafiris who is the committee Secretary as well as Janet Zafiris, Karen Distefano and Deborah Williams who are members of the committee. Holland Police Chief Bryan Haughey also serves as the committee Chair.

In November of 2017 the group known as the Tri-Town Domestic Violence Task Force became the charter member of Stop Abuse Today, Inc. The Task Force served the Towns of Brimfield, Holland and Wales for many years.

Project BREAK

Stop Abuse Today, Inc recently announced the launching of an education and awareness campaign called Project BREAK, [**B**uilding **R**elationships through **E**ducation **A**wareness & **K**nowledge].

The purpose of Project BREAK is to provide the public with education and awareness about domestic abuse, elder abuse and bullying among our youth and focuses on building healthy relationships in order to prevent abuse.

The group strives to develop partnerships with school systems, community centers, senior centers, religious centers and police departments, and aims to develop relationships with municipal and government leaders.

Through the Project BREAK initiative the organization hopes to build upon the foundation the Task Force provided and hopes to continue to grow and expand by providing much needed education and awareness to help prevent the abuse that afflicts our families, our senior citizens, and today's youth.

Task Forces Implemented

In an effort to methodically distribute responsibilities and to generate a productive and well prepared operating system, Stop Abuse Today, Inc implemented Task Forces to work independently of one another.

The principal advantage to coordinating assets in this manner is to allow the group to integrate personnel, priorities and protocols in the most efficient manner possible. Having individual groups of people focus on one subject then bring their ideas forward allows the group to successfully organize plans with a consistent and equitable approach.

In the coming weeks and months the group will be looking for people to join them in the capacity of Task Force members and they have already designated individuals to oversee the groups. Deborah Williams will head up the Domestic Violence Task Force, Janet Zafiris will head up the Elder Abuse Task Force and Karen Distefano will head up the Anti-Bullying Task Force.

Anyone who wishes to join Stop Abuse Today, Inc as a member of a Task Force is encouraged to reach out or attend one of the upcoming meetings. The Executive Committee currently schedules meetings to be held the first Friday of every month beginning at 9A.M. at the Holland Community Center. You can also email Chair Bryan Haughey, bhaughey@hollandma.org or Jennifer Mott, outreach@hollandma.org.

Groups Raise Funds for the Cause



Stop Abuse Today, Inc does not receive direct funding from municipal or government agencies so they are reliant on donations and grants in order to operate. In October, the Holland Police Department sponsored a 5K Walk & Run on behalf of Stop Abuse Today, Inc. In association with Team Hoyt and our Race Director Deborah Williams we raised and donated \$3,240.59.

In November the organization also held a Motorcycle Run in association with the Southbridge Eagles Club in which all proceeds were donated.

Stop Abuse Today, Inc was also the recipient of the proceeds from the Justice 4 Janet Fundraiser. The fundraiser was held in the memory of Janet MacDonald Kastberg who was allegedly murdered by her husband in Holland on June 29th, 2018.