



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police Department Launches Upgraded Web Site *New Interactive Feature Searches Crime Data by Community*

In a new effort to offer improved service and information to Howard County citizens, the Howard County Police Department has significantly upgraded its Web site, www.hcpd.org, and added new features for users.

One of the most exciting additions to the site is a new interactive feature that allows visitors to search for crime data in their own communities. This feature enables users to search for crime information in the area around an address or location on a map.

The enhanced site also offers access to daily crime bulletins, a news room for reporters and citizens, and an updated recruiting page. Visitors can pay red light tickets on-line, submit paperwork to ride-along with a patrol officer or request an officer's attendance at a community meeting. They can fill out forms to get copies of police reports, 911 tapes and permit applications to hold special events in the county.

Visitors also can learn more about the department's charitable activities, youth programs and victim assistance services. Citizens can fill out a survey about the police department or e-mail the agency directly.

The new crime data search program was created in partnership with the county's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) team to enable citizens to seek out information about crime in a community or neighborhood. The data is broken down by the police department's Statistical Reporting Areas, or SRAs, to allow users to research specific locations in the county.

Citizens can find crime statistics in an SRA by entering any address in the county or clicking on an interactive map. The program provides data for the specific SRA requested, as well as the surrounding SRAs in that area.

The police department hopes that the new version of Web site will be a user-friendly resource for visitors interested in learning more about the police department and its activities.

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