



CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

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Cool Cops

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, July 23, 2009 – For the next two weeks, Bainbridge Island Police Officers will be fighting global warming as well as crime. Officers will deliver crime prevention information and energy-efficient compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) to doorsteps across the island as part of the department’s Community Policing Program.

The “Lights on Means Lights Out for Crime” campaign, a partnership between the Police Department, Project Porchlight and Puget Sound Energy, will culminate with a celebration of National Night Out for Safety at Town Square, City Hall on Tuesday, August 4.

“Appropriate lighting is an important safety tool – it can deter criminal activity and help police find the right house quickly in the dark,” said Police Lieutenant Giuntoli, who coordinates the Community Policing Program and initiated the effort. “This campaign gives our officers the chance to interact with residents in a proactive, educational way,” she said.

Lt. Giuntoli approached Puget Sound Energy to explore possibilities for an educational partnership, and learned that the utility had already teamed up with the non-profit Project Porchlight to distribute CFL’s in the region. The Bainbridge Island Police Department is the first in the state to participate in this mostly-volunteer effort. “This is a great opportunity for collaboration,” Lt. Giuntoli said. “The idea is that residents can install the bulb in their porch light on the spot, improving safety and energy efficiency at the same time.”

Initiated in 2008, Bainbridge Island’s Community Policing Program is designed to give police officers the opportunity to strengthen their relationship with the community they serve. “It’s recognized nationwide as a very successful model for encouraging officers to engage with residents in a positive way,” Lt. Giuntoli said.

Through the city’s program, the island is divided into nine zones, with two commissioned officers assigned to each. “The idea is for officers to interact on the neighborhood level, learn about local issues and concerns, and give residents the chance to get to know individual officers,” Lt. Giuntoli said. The model has proven effective in reducing crime and helping to speed resolution of criminal cases, she said.

The National Night Out event is scheduled for August 4, 6 – 9 pm, at Town Square, City Hall. For more information about this event or the Community Policing Program, and contact information for the officers assigned to each island zone, visit www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us, call Lt. Denise Giuntoli at 780-4692 or email dgiuntoli@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us.