



# DURHAM CITIZENS' NEWSLETTER

News and Information from the City of Durham

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## Sowing Safety This Season

With the onset of fall comes school routines, earlier sunsets, cold weather and holiday traditions. It is important that residents be mindful of simple precautions and actions to minimize seasonal hazards and vulnerabilities. This special edition of the Durham Citizens' Newsletter is jointly sponsored by the Durham Fire Department (DFD) and Durham Police Department (DPD) to heighten your awareness of safety strategies and programs.

**National Observances** - October marks two national observances that are important to your safety, your place of residence and your community – Fire Prevention Month and Crime Prevention Month. For details about City of Durham events visit [www.durhamnc.gov](http://www.durhamnc.gov) or call:

**Police Department Public Affairs - 560-4404, ext. 29194**

**Fire Department Public Affairs - 560-4233, ext. 19242**

## Safeguards for October 31 Celebrations

Are you coordinating a fall festival, attending a Halloween party or going trick-or-treating? Here are tips to help keep you, your loved ones and guests safe.

**Clothing** - Costumes should be made of flame retardant materials. Add reflective markings or tape. Shoes should fit (even if they don't go with the costume). Carry only flexible knives, swords or other props. Wear a watch you can read in the dark. Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house. Stay away from open flames. Children especially should practice how to stop, drop and roll if clothing catches fire.

**Decorations** - Battery powered Jack-O-Lantern candles are preferable to a real flame. Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe papers are highly flammable. Keep decorations well away from all open flames and heat sources including light bulbs and heaters. Keep exits clear of decorations so that nothing blocks escape routes.

**Traffic/Travel** - Young children should be accompanied by an adult. Carry a flashlight. Walk, don't run. Obey traffic signals. Stay in familiar neighborhoods and on sidewalks. If no sidewalk, walk on the left side of road facing traffic. Don't cut across yards or driveways, approach only houses that are lit. Know exactly where teenagers and loved ones are going.

Pets - Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know. Pets are often frightened this holiday. Put pets up to protect them from cars and inadvertently biting someone.

Candy - Make sure all candy has wrapping. Check all candy wrapping carefully. Toss out anything that looks suspect.

For information, call DPD Crime Prevention at 560-4404 or the DFD Fire Prevention at 560-4233.

## **Prevent Scrap Metal and Copper Thefts**

Durham In recent years metal thefts have accounted for numerous break-ins and larcenies nationwide and locally. The majority of local incidents have dealt with the theft of copper. Stolen items have included air conditioner coils, copper wires, copper piping used for plumbing, cemetery vases and grave markers, beer kegs, catalytic converters in vehicles ... even street signs and storm drains. For the residents, businesses, churches and other victims of metal theft, the cost of the damage (up to thousands of dollars) far exceeds the value of the stolen material. Here are proactive strategies you can implement to minimize these crimes and save the expense of repair or replacement:

- Install iron gates with padlocks to AC unit and breaker panels
- Add audible alarms to units and breaker panels
- Increase lighting on property
- Install video surveillance
- Start/participate in an active neighborhood watch

### **Proposed Resident Awareness Program (RAP)**

Did you know that if a nearby home is burglarized, your property has an increased chance of also being a burglary target — a phenomenon known as “near-repeat”? The police department’s proposed Resident Awareness Program (RAP) aims to stem burglary trends utilizing crime analysis data, traffic enforcement and community engagement. The department has applied for grant-funding to be able to fully implement the RAP initiative before the 2011 holiday season. To learn more about RAP, call the analytical services manager at 560-4258, ext. 29160.

### **Connect With DPD Community Services**

Residents are encouraged to practice crime prevention year round by connecting with citizen-based programs offered by the police department’s Community Services Bureau. Education and volunteer opportunities include:

- Neighborhood watch workshop (January or February)
- Citizens Police Academy (six-week series in early fall)

- National Crime Victims Rights Week Observance (April)
- Project Safe Neighborhoods (gun violence prevention)
- Gang Resistance Education and Training
- Crisis intervention training (mental health crisis)
- NC Child Response Initiative (child/family trauma focus)
- Police Explorers (leadership exploration for ages 14-21)
- Citizen Observer Patrol (trained volunteer support unit)

Call the Community Services Bureau at 560-4438.

## Fire Prevention Week

A house fire is everyone's worst nightmare - trapped in a room with growing fire, smoke and anxiety. It's a desperate situation, but you can be prepared if there's a plan. When a home evacuation plan is created and practiced, it can make the difference between life and death. This year for Fire Prevention Month, the Durham Fire Department presents a safety contest, "Protect Your Family from Fire - With a Plan." Fourth and fifth grade students and their families are encouraged to enter. Show-off your family's home evacuation plan for a chance to win a prize and lunch where the Durham Exchange Club announces its Firefighters of the Year! Here are tips to remember when creating and your evacuation plan:

- Make sure you've got two ways to exit each room
- Make sure your family has a meeting place outside the home

Once you're out of the home:

- Make sure everyone is accounted for
- Never go back into the house
- Notify the fire department
- Make sure children know important information like your address (they may have to make the call to 911)

Other Fire Prevention Tips to Remember:

- Check your smoke alarm batteries monthly
- Install smoke alarms on every floor
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children
- Never smoke in bed or leave burning cigarettes unattended
- Properly discard smoking materials, wait until they are cooled before throwing them in the trash
- Avoid wearing clothes with long loose fitting sleeves when cooking.

- Give space heaters space, at least three feet

### **Remember to “Fall Back”**

When setting your clocks back on November 6, remember to change the batteries in your smoke alarm!

## **Big Sweep Stream Cleanups Saturday, October 1**

Join neighbors to clean up the banks of Durham’s streams and lakes as part of Big Sweep, October 1. Last year 619 local volunteers did their part to free our waterways from litter. This year, you can make a difference by volunteering to help. The first 10 groups to register will receive a free t-shirt to give away at the cleanup. For information or to sign up, visit [www.KeepDurhamBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepDurhamBeautiful.org).

## **Bull City Connector Linking Downtown, Campus Connections**

Park your car and let the Bull City Connector take you where you want to go! It's a convenient, fare-free, and frequent bus service connecting visitors, business travelers, students, and downtown workers to key destinations in and around Durham, including Duke University, Durham's historic downtown, Ninth Street and Golden Belt. Whether you're looking for dining, entertainment or conducting business, this environment friendly bus service offers an alternative way to get to where you're going. For information and a route map, visit <http://www.bullcityconnector.org>.

## **Subscribe to the City Manager’s Report**

Receive the latest information and important City news via e-mail with the City Manager’s Report. The report from City Manager Thomas J. Bonfield highlights the latest happenings in Durham City Government. To subscribe, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport](http://www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport).

## **Durham ... Beyond the Headlines**

It’s that time of year, when organizations are looking for speakers. The City of Durham is available to talk to you on a wide variety of topics about your city. For us, it’s simple. We want to build strong partnerships with our residents by providing presentations on topics ranging from where your tax dollars go, our water quality, code enforcement in neighborhoods, to parks and recreation and the list goes on... Frankly, we want to be your best resource for getting answers to important questions about Durham. Call us at 560-4123 or email us at [speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov](mailto:speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov). We’re waiting ...

## **Your City - Your Channel**

DTV8 provides programming to keep Durham informed on the important issues and services involving citizens every day. City government produced programs include scheduled meetings of the Durham City Council and the Durham Planning Commission. The City also produces “City Hall This Week,” a program dedicated to informing citizens on what is going on inside Durham’s city hall, and “CityLife,” a

show featuring information on current City issues and upcoming events. For a programming schedule, or to watch DTV8 live on the Web, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8](http://www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8).

## **Notice Under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

Persons who require assistance should call (919) 560-4197, TTY (919) 560-1200, or e-mail [ADA@durhamnc.gov](mailto:ADA@durhamnc.gov) no later than 48 hours before the event.