

**Montague Business Association meeting**  
**Feb. 12, 2013**  
**Montague Public Safety Complex**

**Remarks from Chief Dodge and Mike Sevene**

Chief Dodge shared some tips for businesses and others to better protect themselves from break-ins. Consider adding:

- Motion activated lights--motion sensor switches are available for around \$10 each
- Cameras—Video has been helpful in identifying suspects. If you can arrange your cameras to show part of the street around your business, so much the better
- Alarm systems—Audible alarms can help limit time at your business; alarms can alert the police about a problem.

Other tips included:

- Lights are most effective in more populated areas, as neighbors sometimes notice them first and contact the police
- Leaving lights on helps police see inside at night, but also makes it easy for thieves to see
- Be familiar with your equipment, and check to make sure it is working properly
- If you notice an alarm, contact the police.
- If you are a victim of crime, pay attention (as best you can) for visible scars, marks or tattoos. Any information about how the person looks is useful, as is information about the person's vehicle and direction of travel.
- Some features that might make your business more of a target: Tip jars and ATMs.

Chief Dodge also updated people about current suspects in recent break-ins, and provided photos of them. These two suspects are most likely behind the majority of recent Montague break-ins, and drug addiction is the most likely reason they are seeking quick easy cash.

- Lance Rice is out of jail, and has two arrest warrants pending. If you see him, call the police immediately.
- Terrence Carter is in jail for the moment, however, this may change based on the decisions of the courts.

Officer Sevene visits with businesses and others in the community, and pays attention to what is normal for the area, for example, if you usually leave lights on and they are off, or vice versa. If you are leaving town, you can notify the police.

### **Remarks from Stephan Smith, AH Rist Insurance**

Stephan Smith spoke about insurance issues to pay attention to.

First, if you are seeking insurance, you will be asked if you have had break-ins. Insurance companies want to know what you have done to prevent additional break-ins in the future.

Some considerations that can reduce losses:

--Lights

--Locate cash register in a visible place, and leave the drawer open. Remove cash daily.

--Use deadbolt locks

--Cut back shrubs to reduce hiding places

--Install alarm systems, and make it clear that there is an alarm installed. Alarm systems have not usually been required for businesses in Montague (unlike similar businesses in larger cities/towns).

If you make changes to your security/protection devices, let your insurance agent know, so that your policy is up to date.

For your home:

--Lock your doors

--Trim the bushes

--Watch what you put in your trash/recycling. For example, large screen TV packaging shows you've got new expensive equipment.

### **Q and A with the speakers**

Where are the thieves coming from?

Most of the crimes are done by people in the community, not from away. Montague is not right on I-91, and having the bridge closed is probably keeping some criminals away.

What about using monitoring bracelets on the perpetrators?

Those are expensive, said the chief, and these crimes are relatively small. There are people in town who are being monitored, though, as part of probation.

How can community have an impact?

Contact legislators. Funds for community policing have dried up; Montague has gone from 3 officers on a shift, to 2 officers on a shift. It would probably be helpful for the Business Association to send a letter to local representatives.

Streetlights downtown are not all working. Would it be helpful if they did?

Yes.

Tips from attendees:

- Motion sensing alarms that beep might be helpful in businesses.
- Banks and credit unions offer lock boxes and night drops for business valuables, including cash and disaster plans.

Bottom line, if you see something that needs police attention, call 911.

Are you interested in addressing this issue as part of a Montague Business Association subcommittee? Please let the Association know at [hollygivens29@gmail.com](mailto:hollygivens29@gmail.com), or by speaking with any Steering Committee member. We'll be meeting again on Feb. 19, from 8-9 a.m. at the Montague Public Safety Complex.

To join the Montague Business Association, visit the Web site:

[www.montaguebusinessassociation.com](http://www.montaguebusinessassociation.com)

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