



TOSA WATCH

Wauwatosa's Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

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TOSA WATCH - Wauwatosa's Neighborhood Watch Newsletter is sponsored by:

The Wauwatosa Police Department-
Community Support Division
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Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53226
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TOSA WATCH provides useful information for citizens who participate in the Wauwatosa Block Watch Program. Reader comments and contributions are welcome.

Check Washing

Check washing is a type of financial fraud where criminals steal checks, often from your personal mailbox or a public blue United States Postal Service collection boxes found in your neighborhoods. Chemicals are used to erase written information once the check is in the mail, leaving only the check owner's signature intact. The check is then rewritten, often with much larger values and a new payee, generally the subject who took the check in the first place. Once the check is complete, the subject is off to the bank to make a withdrawal, from one's bank account. While this isn't a new scam, we are starting to see this type of activity in Wauwatosa, so it's definitely something to be aware of. Unfortunately, victims are often unaware of the theft for weeks or until the victim's bank account is drained and the fraudster is gone.

How can you prevent check washing from happening to you?

- Use indelible gel, black ink. These pens can be found in many stores. Just look for the packaging to state "Protects Against" water, fading and fraud. This type of ink is resistant to washing chemicals.
- Pay your bills online. You reduce your risk of having checks taken in the first place. Not everyone is comfortable using online payments, if you fall into this category, follow the steps below to keep you from being a victim.
- If you prefer to pay with a check, if at all possible, hand deliver the check to the recipient.
- Drop your check off at the United States Postal Services office near you or their blue drop boxes in their parking lot. Don't leave your checks in your personal mailbox for the mailman to pick up.
- Monitor your accounts, this is the best way to keep any unauthorized fraudulent activity from happening to you.

Bring any suspicious or fraudulent activity to the bank and then file a police report.

Please, Please, Please

When you're out and about, whether it be at the grocery store or the mall, pumping gas or just walking the dog. Please be aware of your surroundings, pay attention to people, cars and anything that may look suspicious.

It only takes a moment for an incident to occur and for one to become the victim of a crime.

Put your phone away. Once you've gotten to where you need to be, there will be plenty of time to discuss whatever it is that is so important.



If you know someone that may be interested in receiving this newsletter, please have them contact Laura Laurishke at llaurishke@wauwatosa.net or by calling 414-471-8430 ext. 5111. We'd like to get them on the email address list for distribution.

If you know someone that is elderly or disabled and has no access to a computer or the ability to connect to the internet, please have them call the police department and we will set-up arrangements for a newsletter to be sent to them.

The Wauwatosa Police Department will have a limited number of copies of the Tosa Watch newsletter at our department, the Wauwatosa Library and the Hart Park Senior Center

Teen Safety & Responsible Choices

The teenage years are full of new experiences, challenges, and opportunities. It is a time when young people begin to gain more freedom and independence. Although, with that freedom comes the responsibility to make smart, safe decisions. Whether it be at school, online, at parties, or in relationships, the choices that a teen makes today can have a lasting impact on their future.

Teenagers face a wide variety of risks. Risks may include peer pressure, substance use, online dangers, and mental health struggles. Promoting safety and responsible decision-making helps protect their well-being and encourages personal growth, confidence, and leadership.

Key Areas of Teen Safety

1. Online Safety and Social Media
 - Think before you post. Once something is online, it's hard to take back.
 - Protect your privacy. Avoid sharing personal information with strangers.
 - Watch out for scams and cyberbullying. Speak up if something doesn't feel right.
2. Substance Use
 - Teens may be tempted to experiment with drugs, alcohol, or vaping.
 - Know the risks. These substances can affect brain development, judgment, lead to addiction.
 - Learn to say no. Real strength is being able to walk away from peer pressure.
3. Healthy Relationships
 - Respect and trust are the foundation of any healthy relationship.
 - Know the signs of abuse, including manipulation, jealousy or control.
 - Speak up if you or someone you know feels unsafe.
4. Mental Health
 - Stress, anxiety and depression are real and common among teens.
 - It is okay to ask for help. Talking to a trusted adult, counselor, or friend can make a big difference.
 - Self-care is not selfish. Getting enough sleep, eating well, and taking breaks are a part of staying healthy.
5. Physical Safety
 - Wear seatbelts, helmets, and follow safety rules at school and while you are in public places.
 - Avoid Risky behaviors like texting while driving or getting into unsafe situations.
 - Stay aware of your surroundings.

Being a teen doesn't mean you have to have all the answers, but making safe and responsible choices is one of the best ways to protect yourself, and your future. Mistakes happen, but learning from them and working to do better is what matters. Don't be afraid to reach out to a parent, teacher, counselor, or friend. Your safety, health, and happiness are worth it!

Trick or Treat

The City of Wauwatosa's Trick-or-Treat hours are **Sunday, October 26, 2025 from 1-4pm.**

Please contact your Neighborhood Associations directly for information on their events.

Again, the Wauwatosa Police Department will partner with the Wauwatosa Recreation Department for **Trunk-or-Treat**. The event will take place on **Saturday, October 18th from 11am – 1:30pm** at the Fisher Administration Building, East Parking Lot, 12121 W. North Avenue.

There will be plenty of candy, food trucks, popcorn, music and face painting with Suzy Sparkles.

For further details, please follow the Wauwatosa Police Department on Facebook, we will post updates at that location.



Wauwatosa Police Department

James MacGillis - Chief of Police

Community Support Division

Captain Luke Vetter

Lieutenant Brad Beckman

Sergeant Thomas Orlowski

Specialist Mike McDermott

Specialist Dexter Schleis

SRO Farris Griffin

SRO Maria Albiter

SRO Kelsey Pentimalli

Laura Laurishke – Community Support Specialist

Social Media & Online Grooming

Online grooming is a term used to describe tactics used by groomers through the internet to exploit children. Groomers, be it in live streaming or on apps such as Instagram act as a trusted friend and get our children to tell personal stories, learn their insecurities, or share information that may make one feel vulnerable. They go where our children go online.

Groomers generally start off by getting our kids to do small and harmless activities once a trusting relationship has been formed. For example, to show their new friend a cheerleading move that they finally got right or perhaps model some new clothing that fits perfect. Not a big deal to us, if we know these children, but we don't know who may be on the other side of the monitor, laptop or phone. This is just the beginning of what could happen next.

It's never too early to talk with children about what's right and what's wrong online. Set boundaries as most online platforms offer little protection for anyone utilizing programs. Set time limits for online usage, be available to your kids if they have questions about activities that happen online and the dangers that go along with those activities. Inquire about friendships they form and if these people are local or from other states. Online users are only getting younger and younger and don't always have the maturity level or education to make the right decisions.

Remember, our children have the same wants and needs as they always have: to find one's self, a need to find a like-minded individual and to be noticed and given attention. Keep in mind that grooming can't be done in a single conversation and it won't be solved by preventing your children from going online or using technology. Be present, ask questions and pay attention to details.

Things to watch for that could indicate grooming may be happening are as follows:

- Groomer ask for favors and do things in return – they use promises, gifts and offers favors.
- Wants to keep the online relationship secret or private. Just the two of you can know.
- Makes frequent contact, through texting, social media apps and online chat services.
- Ask who else uses your device or computer and what room the device is in.
- Compliments one on their appearance or body, may ask things like, “have you ever been kissed?”
- Insists on meeting in person, makes one feel guilty or threatens if one is unwilling.

This is a heavy topic, but very necessary for anyone caring for children. Stay alert, ask questions and just plain, be in your children's business. Be safe!



Drug Take Back

**Saturday, October 25th
9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m.**

The Wauwatosa Police Department will once again sponsor a Drug Take-Back Event.

The goal is to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposal of prescription medications.
(No syringes accepted)

Please stop by and see us at 1700 N 116th Street, or at Medical College of WI Health Research Center, 8701 Watertown Plank Road. No need to get out of your car, we'll come to you.

Hope to see you there!



**On behalf of the
Wauwatosa Police
Department,
we wish you and
your families**



Tosa's Night Out

The Wauwatosa Police Department and the Wauwatosa Neighborhood Watch Committee would like send a big "THANK YOU" to everyone that participated in Tosa's Night Out Against Crime on Wednesday, August 6th.

The weather was great for family and friends to gather and enjoy all Hart Park had to offer at this years' Tosa's Night Out.

To our Sponsors and Participating Groups, your commitment to support this community event does not go unnoticed. Tosa's Night Out happens because of you, so, **Thank You!**

Monetary Sponsors:

WaterStone Bank
Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin
Action Law * Bunzel's Meat Market and Catering
Current Electric * Meijer * Kiwanis Club of Wauwatosa
Catral Doyle Creative * Fast Signs

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Participating Groups:

Action Law * Bunzel's Meat Market and Catering
Bureau of Consumer Protection * Children's Hospital Foster Care Recruitment
Crime Stoppers * Current Electric
Ebenezer Child Care * Education Foundation of Wauwatosa
Friends of Hoyt Park & Pool * Froedtert Health Community Outreach
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Pour, Inc. * Right at School * Sojourner Family Peace Center
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Three Harbors Council, Boy Scouts of America * United States Coast Guard
WaterStone Bank * Wauwatosa Crime Stoppers *
Wauwatosa Department of Public Works * Wauwatosa Fire Department
Wauwatosa Health Department * Wauwatosa Lion's Club
Wauwatosa Police Bureau Services * Wauwatosa Police Dispatch
Wauwatosa Police K9 * Wauwatosa Police Motor Patrol
Wauwatosa Police Special Response Team * Wauwatosa Public Library
Wauwatosa Recreation Center * Wauwatosa Sustainability Committee
Wauwatosa Veteran's Memorial Committee * WAVE Education Fund
Wraparound – Milwaukee County Health & Human Services