

City Page

NEWS & INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

Labor Day Schedule

In observance of the Labor Day holiday, City offices will be closed on Monday, September 5.

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) will operate on a Sunday schedule on Monday, September 5. The Charlotte Trolley also will operate on a Sunday schedule. No express service will operate except for the 42X Carwinds Express, which will operate according to its regular schedule. Gold Rush services will not operate.

Solid Waste Services will operate on a normal collection schedule.

2 BIG PREMIERES!!



Thursdays at 5:30 p.m.
Premieres September 15

CITY SOURCE

Straight from the Source. Tune into this weekly news show with local anchor **Suzette Rhee** as she provides you the latest on City government happenings and issues.

Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m.
Premieres October 5



CMPD Today... a whole new look at policing. Chief Darrel Stephens and other members of the CMPD take you beyond the news headlines for an inside look at policing today.

**Your Source for Government
News & Information.**

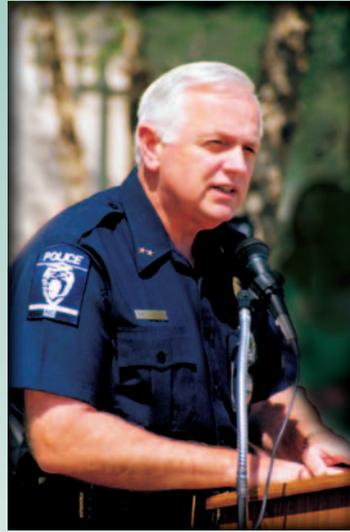


Community safety - A continuing challenge

By Darrel Stephens, Chief of Police

Too often, the news media and some in the community look no further than holding the police accountable for making crime, violence, drug abuse and disorderly behavior go away. Too often, they shine a glaring spotlight on the occurrence of crime yet pay little attention when a crime is solved, warrants issued and people arrested, giving way to inaccurate perceptions about crime rates and issues.

Too often, people believe a decrease in crime and fear can be attained by simply increasing the visibility of the police.



Chief Darrel Stephens, CMPD

Crime occurs in a complex set of interactions among places, victims and offenders. The police and the criminal justice system play an important role in dealing with crime, but it requires much more to create a safer community and decrease crime.

Lasting crime reduction requires a real partnership between the police and those who have the most control over the places where crime occurs. It requires victims to change the behavior that increases their vulnerability to crime. It requires more effective short term methods for dealing with current offenders and more long term efforts to address the conditions-such as drug and alcohol abuse-that create new offenders.

The officers of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department have and will continue to do everything we can to create a safer community. We have overwhelmed the ability of the court system to handle our arrests and citations. As a result, the District Attorney's office is forced to dismiss lower priority cases and accept plea bargains because there are not enough resources to take the cases to trial. The best way to control the most prolific violent and property crime offenders is to arrest, prosecute, convict and put them in prison.

That approach is denied in too many cases because of the under-funded court system and a North Carolina prison system that has for years been beyond capacity.

The police alone cannot create a safer community. Cooperative victims and witnesses are required for successful prosecution. The community controls such basic security measures as lighting, trimmed shrubs, fencing, closing a garage door, locking a car and securing personal property. People's lifestyle choices - from abusing drugs and alcohol to prostitution and gambling -increase the potential for becoming a victim or offender. Parents are responsible for and are much more effective in controlling the behavior of their children than police.

Working together, with partners taking action in their areas of influence, we will achieve a more lasting level of safety than we could ever accomplish acting on our own. Join with your neighbors, your church, your co-workers, your family and the police as true partners in the effort to create and sustain the type of community we all want and deserve. For information about how to start a Neighborhood or Business Watch program or how your neighborhood or organization can get involved, please call Crime Prevention at **704.336.2310** or contact your CMPD district office.

An overview of crime in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

There have been increases in property crime for the past two years throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg; however since 1994, the violent crime rate has declined with the exception of 1997 when it did not change from the previous year. Violent crime increases in the first six months of this year were driven by robberies - they have increased by 34.5% from 1,174 last year to 1,579 - 8.7 a day throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg:

- Robberies declined by 7.3% in 2003 - there was a slight increase in 2004 but the current trend began in the last three months of 2004
- Repeat robbery offenders represent a significant challenge. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police detectives conservatively estimate 50 to 60% of the people they have arrested this year have been arrested before. Some are out on bail awaiting trial for other cases while others have been recently released from prison
- Since 1999, when it had 84 homicides, Charlotte-Mecklenburg experienced declines each year except in 2002 when the number increased by one over the previous year
- In 2004, there were 60 homicides - the lowest number in the past 17 years except for 1997 when there were 59.

Lead based paint training for renovators, remodelers

Renovating or repairing a home built before 1978? If you are, it is a good chance the home may contain lead based paint, which poses a serious threat to your children and family. To reduce the dangers to your loved ones, the City of Charlotte in cooperation with the National Paint and Coatings Association and the MasiMax Environmental Health and Safety Services is offering a free class on techniques for working with lead based paint, **7:45 a.m. - 4 p.m., Friday, September 30. The registration deadline is September 14.**

The training will teach attendees lead-safe work practices and the strategies for implementing lead-safe practices to reduce and control dust and debris created during work. It also will enable contractors to perform "Interim Controls" legally in North Carolina.

The class is open to everyone regardless of skill level ranging from the general contractor to the do-it-yourselfer. Participants who pass the test will receive a completion certificate from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. To register, visit www.leadsafetraining.org or call **704.336.2911**.

