

City Page

NEWS & INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

Housing deadline extended for Katrina evacuees

The City of Charlotte will provide approximately \$1 million in rental assistance for Katrina survivors here locally between December and March 1 through an interim housing shelter program. The action provides relief to evacuees, who were affected by FEMA's decision to discontinue payments for hotel rooms on December 15.

The City worked with the North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) and FEMA to discuss requirements for accessing funds in the State's Public Assistance Interim Shelter Program. NCEM administers the FEMA funded program, and the City can seek reimbursement from the State for housing related expenses.

Christmas Tree Collection

Once you've exchanged the gifts and brought in the New Year, the City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services will be ready to collect your natural Christmas trees.



Remember to remove all decorations before placing your tree at the curb.

- Place natural trees at curbside beginning January 2, 2006. Make sure the tree is at the curb no later than 6:30 a.m. on your scheduled day of collection.
- If tree is taller than 6 ft., cut it in half
- Remove all decorations, including lights, tinsel, ornaments; and metal and plastic tree stands

Artificial trees should be scheduled for a bulky item collection. To schedule a bulky item collection, go to <http://curbit.charmeck.org> or call 311.

City holiday hours

City of Charlotte offices will be closed Monday, January 2.

Solid Waste crews will provide service on Friday, December 30 and Monday, January 2.

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) buses and shuttles will operate on a Sunday schedule on New Year's Day, January 1 and on Monday, January 2. No express service will operate on either day.

MLK Medallion Award

Do you know someone who promotes the ideals of racial equality and social justice as espoused by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.? Then nominate him or her for the 2006 MLK Medallion Award. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee is accepting nominations until January 6.

For more information, visit crc.charmeck.org or call 704.336.5271.

"Wanted" Billboards Part of Robbery Prevention Efforts

Starting in January, you will see billboards like this around the City. They are a new addition to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's approach to locating and arresting more known robbery suspects. Other cities, including Kansas City, Cincinnati and Memphis, have had success using a similar approach.

While robberies are up 32% over last year, CMPD's Robbery Offender Apprehension Team has arrested more than 246 criminals with more than 600 charges. The Department is looking for the public's help to make even more arrests.



"These billboards, in addition to other steps we're taking, will help us get off the street the people who are committing a majority of crimes," said Captain Harold Medlock.

The Charlotte City Council approved funding for the six-month comprehensive communication campaign at its December 12th meeting. Adams Outdoor Advertising is donating half the billboards for the initiative.

CMPD has increased overtime for detectives investigating robberies and officers patrolling robbery hotspots and is working with area businesses to make their establishments less vulnerable.

Learn robbery trends, be safe

Reducing and preventing robberies is one of the priorities for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. According to robbery detectives, major trends include:

- 46% of commercial robberies and 40% of personal robberies occur between 6 p.m. and midnight
- 30% of personal robberies occur in streets/parking lots, with the majority in and around apartment complexes
- Many robberies involve multiple victims and suspects; many of the suspects are under the age of 20.

Increase your personal safety by practicing a few basic safety measures:

- Be aware of your surroundings, notice and avoid people who seem to be loitering in parking lots or other odd areas. Don't be afraid to call the police to investigate suspicious circumstances, unusual people or strange noises
- Always lock your doors after entering or leaving your car
- Have your car keys in hand so you don't have to linger before entering your car
- Do not carry large amounts of cash. Have retirement, social security or other checks automatically deposited into your bank account
- Never allow someone to look over your shoulder while you use your credit/debit card or enter your personal identification number (PIN)
- If you must carry a purse, keep it firmly in your hand with the clasp nearest your body. Do not dangle it as a target.
- Travel, walk, and park in well lit areas
- There is safety in numbers. Walk with friends or in a group.

