

ERIC R. FINCH
MPA, CHIEF OF
POLICE

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MONTEZUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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MONTEZUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT 2024

“Setting the Pace... For Today’s Law Enforcement”



Presented by
Eric R. Finch, Chief of Police

A message from the Chief



ERIC FINCH
CHIEF OF POLICE

Greetings!

On behalf of the Montezuma Police Department and the entire City of Montezuma, it is my pleasure to welcome you into our City and into a partnership that can benefit both of us.

Our motto, **“Setting the Pace... For Today’s Law Enforcement”** summarize our determination to give you the most modern, well-trained, best equipped

police department possible. The slogan, **“Together- we can make a a difference”** emphasizes our commitment to work with our citizens, businesses and visitors to combat crime and cooperate on issues involving public safety. Our pro-active stance on problem solving allows us many times, to avoid situations which would lead to property loss, damage or personal injury.

The Mission of the Montezuma Police Department is to:

- **Determine and Apprehend Criminals**
- **Maintain strong police-community relations**
- **To continually enhance the training and expertise of each member of the police force**

At the Montezuma Police Department we stand ready, willing and able to assist you or your family in any way possible. We encourage you to get to know our citizens and other city employees and look forward to a long and continuous partnership.

Sincerely,

Eric R. Finch, Sr

Eric R. Finch, Sr
Chief of Police

Over View of Montezuma Police Department

Currently, the Montezuma Police Department consists of 15 full-time employees and 15 part-time employees for a total of 27 employees. The Montezuma Police Department is made up of the following employees which handle the day to day operation for the department.

- **1 Chief of Police**
 - **1 Captain**
 - **4 Supervision Certification**
 - **6 Field Training Officer Certification**
 - **1 Child Abuse Investigator**
 - **1 Crime Scene Investigator**
 - **2 Evidence Custodians**
 - **1 K-9 Position**
 - **5 Officers**
 - **3 Part-Time Officers**
 - **2 School Crossing Guards**
 - **1 Records Manager**
 - **1 Certification Manager**
 - **1 Municipal Clerk**
 - **1 Police Chaplin**
 - **1 Judge**
 - **1 Solicitor**
 - **1 Probation Officer**
 - **1 Indigent Attorney**
-

The Montezuma Police Department has proud itself as becoming a self-sufficient department and depends mainly upon itself to solve most of the crime with the City of Montezuma. Members of the Montezuma Police Department officers have 50 different types of degrees/ certification to achieve the above task. They consist of the following:

- **1 Georgia Command College Graduate**
- **1 Professional Management Graduate**
- **1 Executive Management Graduate**
- **1 Management Certification**
- **1 Officer w/ Master Degree**
- **4 Officers w/ Bachelor Degree**
- **6 Officers w/ Associate Degree**
- **2 POST Certified Instructors**
- **1 Firearm Instructor**
- **1 Certified Clerk of Court**
- **1 Sexual Offender Investigator**
- **1 Certified K-9 Handler**
- **2 Certification Managers**
- **10 Radar Operators**
- **4 Supervision Certification**
- **2 Intermediate Certification**
- **2 Certified SWAT Members**
- **1 GCIC TAC Officer**
- **1 Certified Police Chaplin**

***Officer of the Year Awarded to:
Avery Cruthirds***



Ofc. Avery Cruthirds has been selected Officer of the year 2024. *Ofc. Cruthirds* have been employed with the City of Montezuma since November 05, 2024. He graduated from SGTC Law Enforcement Academy in April of 2023 and also graduated from Middle Georgia State University with a Bachelors in Criminal Justice. *Ofc. Avery Cruthirds* has conducted the most follow up investigations in the department and assisted in closing the most cases for 2024. In that period of time, he has truly distinguished himself and received the respect and admiration of his peers, supervisors and the City of Montezuma. In addition to his patrol duties, *Ofc. Cruthirds* also serves as a Community Service Officer and performs all his duties in an exemplary manner. He is, without question, a highly effective team player who strives to continuously make the Montezuma Police Department a model statewide.

***TAC of the Year Awarded to:
Nathandriel Williamson***



*The Men and Women of the Montezuma Police Department want to personally congratulate our Municipal Court Clerk, **Mrs. Nathandriel Williamson** on receiving Central Regional TAC Officer Of The Year.*

The Montezuma Municipal Court is in the top 1% in the State of Georgia. "Mrs. Williamson is a very hard worker who is dedicated to excellence every day when she enters the doors of the Montezuma Police Department, and I am super proud of her accomplishments." - Chief Eric Finch

Montezuma Police Department K-9 Program

“K9 PUCKY”



The Montezuma Police Department was awarded a grant through the Flint Energy Corporation for \$5,000. The Montezuma Police Department was able to buy a drug dog named “Pucky”. “Pucky” is a state and Nationally Certified K-9. Since the program has been implemented, the Montezuma Police Department has filed on \$170,000 worth of property and cash. “Pucky” has been invited to visit at several churches, schools programs and the Beaver Creek Festival. “Pucky” has been very instrumental in assisting other agencies with drug investigations. The Montezuma Police Department was able to purchase a Special Response/ Command Vehicle through this program. Currently, our K-9 Officer Steven Polkinghorn. K9 Officer Polkinghorn and “Pucky” completed the Georgia Canine Academy in Dooly County, Georgia

ACHIEVEMENTS

01 E-911

The Montezuma Police Department was the driving agency to help open the Middle Flint Regional E-911 Center in Ellaville, Georgia. The center is the largest E-911 Center in the Southeastern United States. The E-911 center serves seven counties. The Middle Flint Regional E-911 Center has been awarded several communication award. The E-911 Center serves 9 counties, Schley, Sumter, Macon Dooly, Marion, Webster, Stewart, Taylor and Talbot.

02 Patrol Division

The Montezuma Police Department is responsible for patrolling the street of Montezuma and responded to 9,727 calls for service. The Montezuma Police Department responded to 553 incidents, 63 accidents, 227 miscellaneous calls, 144 arrests, 2,148 traffic stops and 1,941 citations.

03 Training Division

The Montezuma Police Department provided training for over (30) different law enforcement agencies during the year of 2024. The Montezuma Police Department is known throughout the State of Georgia as a premiere agency within the State of Georgia with excellent police policies and training. Our instructors teach on Federal, State and Local levels.



UPGRADES IN OUR DEPARTMENT



UPGRADE

TextMyGov

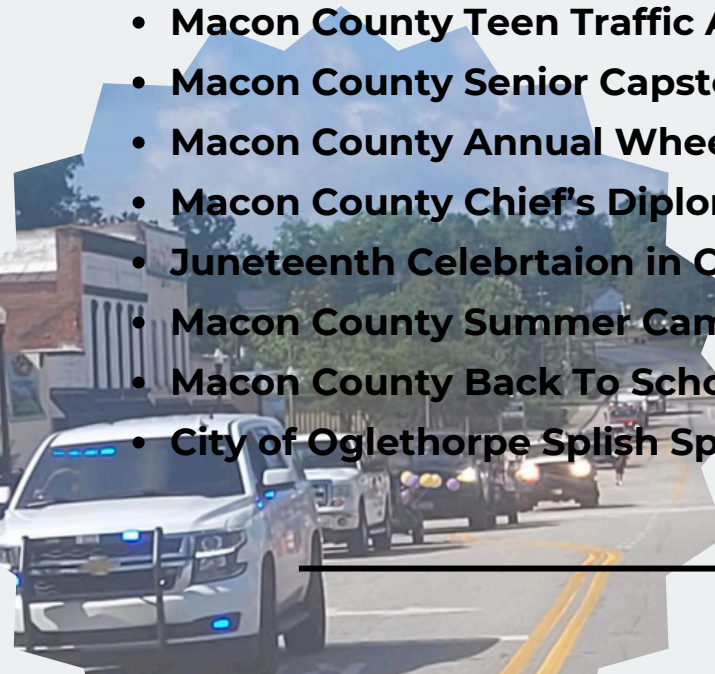
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- Convenience of paying tickets on-line (www.montezumapay.com)
 - New Standard operating procedure manual was developed
 - PowerDMS Management Data System
 - Courtroom Security
 - New filing system in records
 - Yearly training on domestic violence, firearm, vehicle pursuit, use of force, legislature update
 - Conducting follow up investigations
 - Establish hiring and promotion polices
 - Computerized and Modernized Patrol Cars
 - National and State certified K-9 Program
 - Computerized Evidence Room
 - Crime mapping Program
 - Computer Generated Tasers
 - Sig Saue Pistols with mounted Optics
 - MyGov App
 - Text Msg briefings of shifts to all police personnel daily
 - Establish the Boys and Girls club in June 2,2014
 - Added 32 Flock Cameras around the city
 - Community with Cops
 - Chief's Diploma Program
 - Added a Special Response Vehicle
 - Added a Speed Detection Trailers around the community
 - Facial Recognition Software
 - Remolded the Montezuma Police Department
-

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

STRONG COMMUNITY RELATIONS ARE VITAL TO THE MONTEZUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT BY FOSTERING A POSITIVE REPUTATION, BUILDING TRUST WITH RESIDENTS, AND ENSURING MONTEZUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT IS A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTOR TO OUR COMMUNITY.

HERE ARE SOME OF MANY EVENTS MONTEZUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT WERE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN...

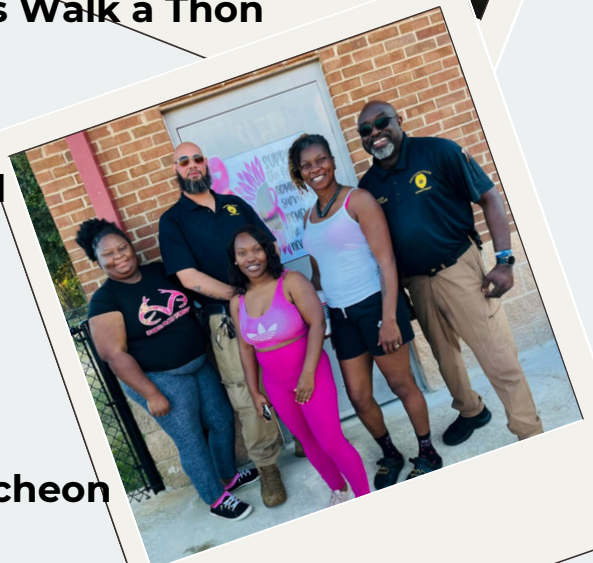
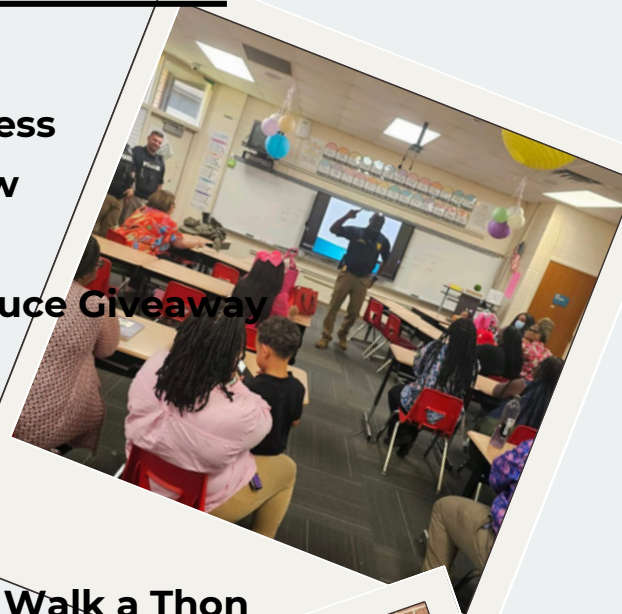
- **Oglethorpe Pop-Up Shop**
- **Macon County Dr. Seuss Read across America Program**
- **Macon County Easter Egg Hunt**
- **Macon County Holy Week**
- **Oglethorpe Clean Up Day**
- **Macon County High School Career Day**
- **Oglethorpe Downtown Market**
- **Montezuma City Clean Up Day**
- **Oglethorpe Kick Ball Tournament**
- **Ga Cities Week Beaver Hunt**
- **Roquan Smith's Football Camp**
- **Macon County Elementary Public Safety**
- **Montezuma's Meet Your City Leaders/ Heros**
- **Macon County Teen Traffic Awareness Demonstration**
- **Macon County Senior Capstone Program**
- **Macon County Annual Wheelchair Parade**
- **Macon County Chief's Diploma Program**
- **Juneteenth Celebration in Oglethorpe**
- **Macon County Summer Camp**
- **Macon County Back To School Rally**
- **City of Oglethorpe Splish Splash Water Bash**



COMMUNITY RELATIONS CONT.



- Drug Free Macon County
- Macon County Active Shooter Awareness
- Garden Valley Back to School Car Show
- Faith and Blue Week
- Macon County Community Fresh Produce Giveaway
- Beaver Creek Festival
- Macon County Duck Race
- Oglethorpe Annual Trunk or Treat
- Montezuma Annual Trunk or Treat
- Montezuma Breast Cancer Awareness Walk a Thon
- Coffee with Cops
- Roquan Smith's Turkey Giveaway
- Macon County Head Start Fall Festival
- Oglethorpe Christmas Parade
- Montezuma Christmas Parade
- Toys for Tots Drive
- Macon County Safe Driving Summit
- Macon County Annual Christmas Luncheon
- Montezuma Christmas in the Park



PHOTOS OF OUR COMMUNITY

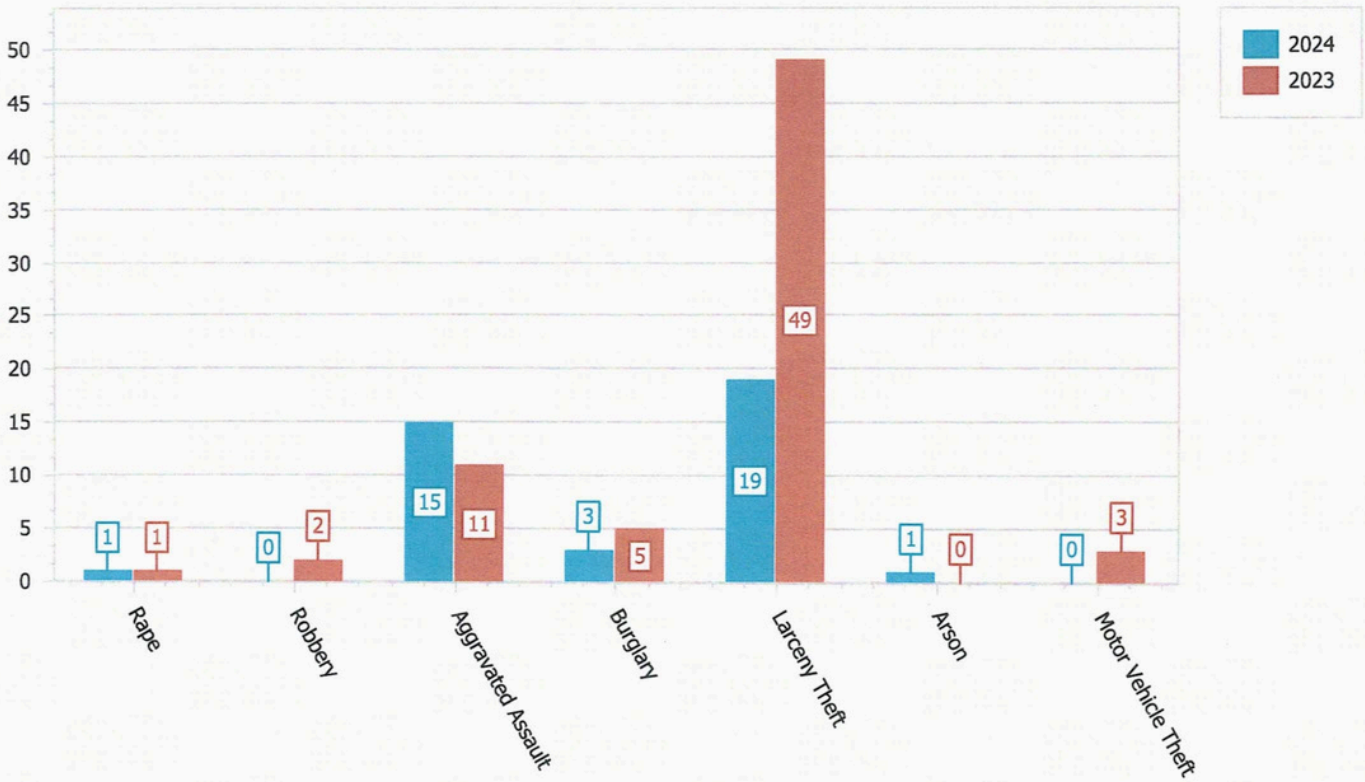




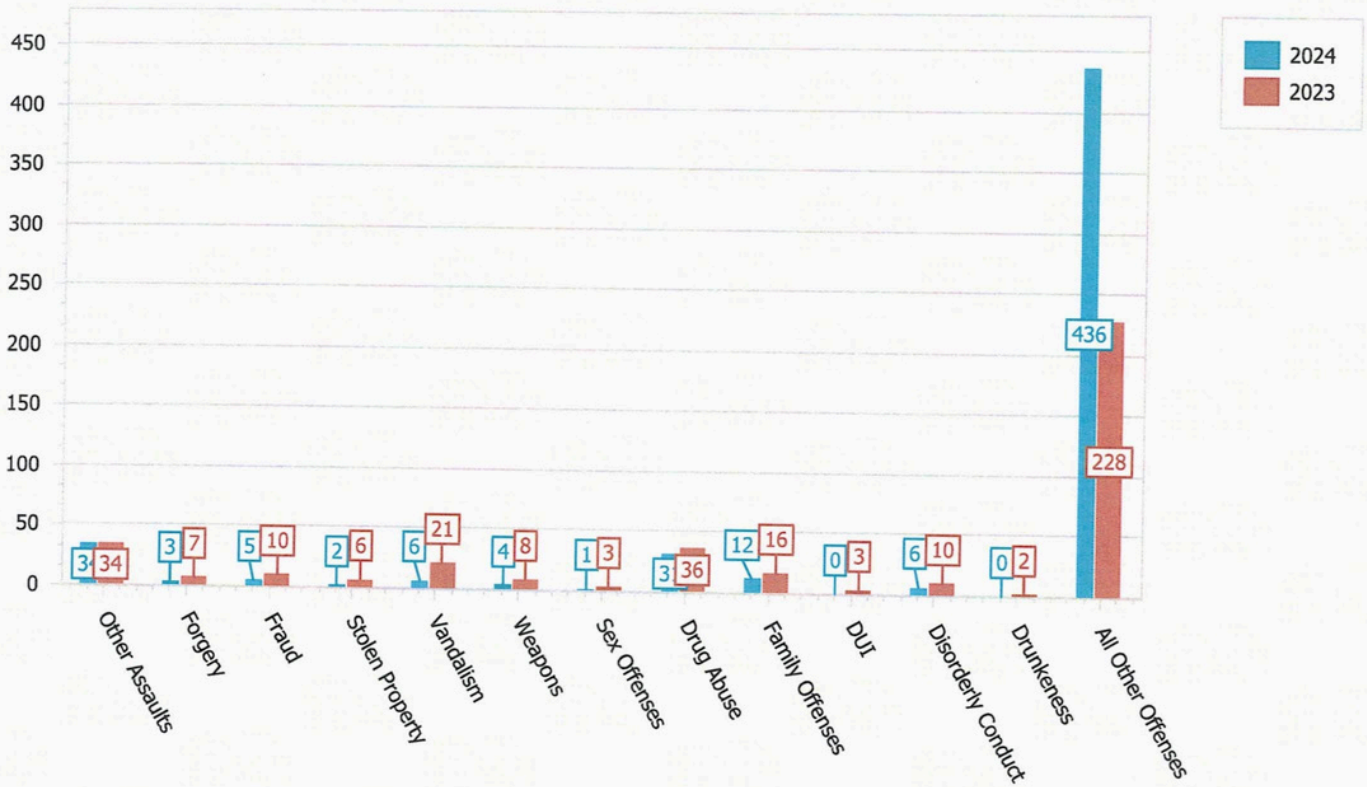
MONTEZUMA **STATS**

WHERE WE ARE...

PART 1 CRIME STATISTICS YTD



PART 2 CRIME STATISTICS YTD



Crime Statistics Report

Printed:01/02/2025 15:30:43

Date Range: 1/01/2024, 00:00:00 - 12/31/2024, 23:59:00

Agency: Montezuma Police Department

Violation Category	Comparison Date Range	Current Date Range	% Difference
PART 1	01/01/2023 - 12/31/2023	01/01/2024 - 12/31/2024	
Murder (09A, 09B)			
Rape (11A, 11B, 11C, 36B)	1	1	0.00%
Robbery (120)	2	0	-100.00%
Aggravated Assault (13A)	11	15	36.36%
Burglary (220)	5	3	-40.00%
Larceny Theft (23A - 23H)	49	19	-61.22%
Motor Vehicle Theft (240)	3	0	-100.00%
Arson (200)	0	1	100.00%
TOTAL PART 1 CRIMES	71	39	
PART 2			
Other Assaults (13B, 13C)	34	34	0.00%
Forgery (250)	7	3	-57.14%
Fraud (26A - 26H)	10	5	-50.00%
Embezzlement (270)			
Stolen Property (210, 280)	6	2	-66.67%
Vandalism (290)	21	6	-71.43%
Weapons (520)	8	4	-50.00%
Prostitution (40A, 40B, 40C)			
Sex Offenses (11D, 36A, 360, 64A - 64B, 370, 90H)	3	1	-66.67%
Drug Abuse (35A, 35B)	36	31	-13.89%
Gambling (39A - 39D)			
Family Offenses (90F)	16	12	-25.00%
DUI (90D)	3	0	-100.00%
Liquor Laws (90G)			
Disorderly Conduct (90C)	10	6	-40.00%
Drunkenness (90E)	2	0	-100.00%
All Other Offenses (720, 510, 100, 90J, 90B, 90A, 90Z)	228	436	91.23%
TOTAL PART 2 CRIMES	384	540	
Arrests			
Adults	215	133	-38.14%
Juvenile	14	10	-28.57%
TOTAL Arrests	229	143	



“SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING!”

ROBBERY PREVENTION

We have all been told at one time or another to take a moment out of our hectic schedules to enjoy the small things around us... the sunset... dew on the grass.. a child's smile... a loved one's laughter... and of course the sight and smell of beautiful roses. Paying attention to our surroundings is also a key element in robbery prevention



Be Aware

Be Aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Criminals count on you being preoccupied with shopping, banking or getting in/out of your vehicle instead of paying attention to them. Take a moment observe who is in the parking area or close to the building before you exit your car. Does it make sense to walk past someone just standing around?



Lighting

If the area is dark, you can't see if someone is hiding behind shrubbery, trees or other obstructions, At home install additional exterior lighting and keep shrubbery at window still level and trees trimmed to prevent hiding places. Speak with management about inadequate lighting or overgrown shrubbery around your apartment or businesses that you frequent.



Avoid being alone

While walking, do not take short cuts through wooded or isolated areas alleys, and dark, poorly lit areas. Plan your route. If the area is unfamiliar to you, consider walking with a friend or traveling by car. If approached by a stranger, maintain the distance of an arm's length. Project a no-nonsense attitude and quickly walk away. Move with confidence and stay alert!



Being followed

If you think you are being followed, cross the street, walk quickly or run to a busy store, restaurant, gas station, or lighted house

If a car is following you, turn and run in the opposite direction. If you suspect that you are being followed while driving, don't drive home!

Go to the nearest police station, fire station or business. Blow your horn to draw attention to your vehicle while driving up to the location

If robbed, stay calm and don't resist! Attempt to get a good description of your attacker and call police immediately.

NOTHING THAT YOU CARRY ON YOUR PERSON IS WORTH YOUR LIFE!



BURGLARY PREVENTION

Burglars go through neighborhoods looking for easy targets. During the day they see uncut lawns, stuffed mailboxes news papers piled up, and valuable items. These conditions act as clues to burglars that “this home” is an easy target. At night they see darkened houses or ones with the same light on for the same length of time every night. Again these are signals to burglars that “this home” is an easy target. The best way to stop the crime in your neighborhood and to reduce the chance that the crime of burglary will effect you.



Don't be a temptation to a thief

Put lawn equipment, bikes, grills and garen tools away.
Never leave a not saying you are gone on the door



Locks

Get the best. No lock is 100% burglar proof, get advice from a lock smith to find the best fit for your home.
Change locks if you lose your keys



Outside of the house

Have adequate lighting, trim trees and shrubs to prevent a burglar from hiding in your yard or breaking in without being seen.



Windows

Most windows can be pinned for security. Some windows come with security locks, USE THEM!



Alarms

An Alarm system is an excellent way to have home security as it provides peace of mind, especially while you are away from home.

Remember, if you are going to be out of town take advantage of the Montezuma Police Department's free house check service. To activate a house check call the police department before you leave and request a house check. Officers patrolling you zone will monitor your residence while you are away.

CHURCH SAFETY



We hear the phrase often about the “good old days”... one of the things that is definitely different today are incidents of crimes involving churches. We encourage you to take proactive steps to reduce the opportunities for criminal encounters to occur on your church grounds

Exterior Security:

- Install additional lighting in parking lots and entryways if area are poorly lit.
- To prevent hiding places, keep the shrubbery trimmed away from doors and windows.
- Install solid wood or sheet metal faced doors
- Check all windows for defective locking devices for replacement or repair.

Key Control:

- Maintain an accurate key distribution list and check with the recipients periodically to identify lost or stolen keys
- Consider changing locks every 3-5 years and reissue keys
- Create a user form to track who is in the church and list the responsible key holder. Ideally, one person should open and close the church to eliminate need for excessive keys being distributed.

Church Safety Team:

- Ask neighborhood residents and businesses to join you in establishing a community watch..
- Form a safety team to assess the overall security of the church (call Chief Eric Finch)
- Designate safety monitors to check on the church periodically.

Neighborhood Watch

ARE YOU IN A GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD?

Being a good neighbor is the primary reason that neighborhood watch programs work!

Good neighbors concerned about that delivery man or a unfamiliar car driving slowly through the neighborhood will stop and take notice.

Good neighbors meet their neighbors and exchange vital information for emergency purposes.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM...

Works! It strengthens the relationship between the community and the police, while providing a cost effective method to reduce crime!

A daily part of neighborhood living, not series of meetings. The basic premise of the watch program is You watch my house and I watch your house.

Teaches the resident about proactive strategies and techniques in the fight against crime.

Creates an awareness among residents to assist in the prevention of criminal activity in their communities.

Helps build community pride and provides the mechanism for residents to address other neighborhood concerns.



SENIORS BEWARE!

SCAM ALERT!



There are dishonest people pretending to be Social Workers, agency or church volunteers so that they can get inside your home and steal your personal information, such as credit cards, money and other valuables. Please Follow these simple tips.

-
- **Do not let strangers in your home!**
 - **Don't judge a book by its cover- well dressed people commit crimes and so do women!**
 - **If you have not called or signed up for social services, free groceries or medical attention, do not let a stranger convince you that you need their services.**
 - **If you have called for services, check the person's identification before they enter your home. Ask them to press the ID card against the window or slide it under the door.**
 - **DO NOT TRUST A CHAIN LOCK; IT CAN BE EASILY BROKEN WITH ENOUGH FORCE!**
 - **Never let anyone know that you live alone or are at home alone.**
 - **As soon as a stranger appears, call a trusted neighbor and ask them to watch your home. Remain on the phone with them, until the stranger leaves.**
 - **WHEN IN DOUBT, CALL 911!**

THESE ARE SOME OF THE LATEST SCAMS:

- **A woman states that she is a social worker and needs to give you a hearing test. When you turn away from her she grabs your valuables or you discover items missing after she has left.**
- **A woman pretending to be a church or charity worker brings you a box of free groceries and steals you valuables. When you open your purse to show her some identification, she grabs your purse and runs out the door.**

Remember: These scams can involve criminals from different races and they can be male or female working alone or as a team.

VEHICLE SAFETY

So you've finally found a parking place for your car,
but did you remember to....

- Remove all valuables from the seats and/or floor area BEFORE arriving at your destination?
 - Avoid parking on deserted street?
 - Report suspicious activities to the police or parking attendant?
 - Check your vehicle/ tag when you return?
-

HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR TAG/DECAL LATELY?



Many criminals count on you never noticing that your decal
or tag is missing, until they have left the scene.

- When was the last time you actually walked around your vehicle to check your tag decal? Most people can honestly say "almost never".
- Checking the exterior of your vehicle should be part of your daily routine, whether your car is parked in your driveway or in the parking lot!
- Running into the gas station or the store for a moment? check your tag when you return to your vehicle
- Do you know your tag and/or decal number? You should carry the information in your wallet for a quick reference.

BEING PART OF THE TEAM



ALL APPLICANTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS TO APPLY:



01

NEEDS

- U.S. Citizen
- Minimum age of 21 (Police Officer)
- High school diploma
- Honorable Discharge (if applicable)

NO'S

- NO Felony Convictions
- NO convictions for crimes involving false statements or moral turpitude
- NO pattern of misdemeanor or traffic convictions which would represent a disregard for the law.

02



03

WANTS

- Good moral character
- Good physical condition
- Successfully complete ALL phases of hiring process
- Former police officers must have good standing with P.O.S.T.

In remembrance of Martha Jean Hardy

November 5, 1953 - November 24, 2024



For the past 28 years, Ms. Hardy has been by my side. Every decision I've made at the Montezuma Police Department, I've asked for her opinion because she saw and witnessed things I hadn't. She was one of the few people I totally trusted because of her faith, wisdom, and straight forwardness. My prayers are with her family especially Jeremy who was raised at the Montezuma Police Department. Even though in sickness, Mrs. Hardy still wanted to return to the Montezuma Police Department, and I advised her "No, because if we are going to be great, I needed her to be at her best". -Chief Eric Finch

The Men and Women of the Montezuma Police Department want to express our deepest sympathy to the Hardy family during this difficult time. Ms. Hardy was a dedicated member of our team and will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Rest in Peace Ms. Martha Hardy.