



# BIRCHWOOD

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2023



## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY REMINDER

By Samantha Mancini | School Bus Stop-Arm Deputy

As a new school year begins, pedestrian and traffic safety require the cooperation of everyone on the road. One of the most critical aspects of back-to-school safety is understanding and obeying Minnesota’s school bus stop arm laws. Before picking up or dropping off students, a school bus signals its stop by flashing amber lights, and it’s crucial that drivers don’t race around the bus at this time. Once at a complete stop, red lights activate and the stop arm extends, indicating that traffic in all directions must come to a complete stop. Failing to stop is not only against the law but could have severe and irreversible consequences. For decades, the Sheriff’s Office has had a dedicated deputy to investigate all reported school bus stop arm violations in the county. Violations can result in hefty fines, losing a driver’s license, or even jail time if a child is injured or killed.

The well-being of our community’s youngest members depends on each of us making responsible choices on the road. Together, we can ensure that our children’s journey to school is a safe and happy one.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

12

TRAFFIC STOPS

3

# WC23043405

## FRAUD/THEFT

XX OAKRIDGE DRIVE

At 7:48pm on Aug. 22, a deputy spoke with a caller who reported theft via a Target "Shipt" order. The caller had placed a grocery order through the North St. Paul Target at 5pm. When checking on the progress of the order at 6:10pm, the caller saw that all the groceries had been canceled and replaced with an Apple iPad. The caller had already spoken with Shipt and the Target store and the transaction was in the process of being canceled. The caller was unable to see a name or identifying number for the Shipt employee. The deputy advised the victim to call back if a full refund of \$347.34 wasn't provided and to contact the North St. Paul Police department since the transaction took place in their city. The deputy also contacted the Target store and spoke with the asset protection employee to request that video be preserved to use in an investigation.



## MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF



As a new fiscal year approaches, it seems like a good time to highlight the state of the Sheriff's Office, where we strive to provide Washington County citizens with efficient and cost-effective services. In 2023, we prioritized our commitment to the recruitment and retention of the highest-caliber law enforcement professionals possible, in part through competitive wage ranges. The state of Minnesota currently has an unprecedented 189 agencies seeking qualified candidates. I am proud to report our deputy positions are currently fully staffed, allowing us to maintain a highly skilled and qualified team. This is crucial at a time when we face escalating demands across all the communities we serve, including a sustained increase in agency calls in our patrol division. During the past three years, we've experienced a staggering 467 percent increase involving people in crisis in our response areas.

Looking ahead into 2024, we expect these trends to continue, and we remain committed to working in partnership with our communities to provide the highest level of public safety services possible. Thank you for your continued trust and I look forward to working together.

In service,

Sheriff Dan Starry