

January 22, 2014

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM MINNEAPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT



The email circulating downtown over the last week regarding multiple cell phone thefts occurring in the skyways was an **unfounded** rumor. It is true that cell phone theft is on the rise in Minneapolis as it is across the country but a specific "rash" of cell phone thefts in downtown is **false**. It is important to note that personal safety should ALWAYS be observed whether a crime pattern has been identified or not. Here are a few tips to help keep you and your property safe.

BE SMART WITH YOUR PHONE—DON'T BE A VICTIM

- While walking, waiting for, or riding the bus/LRT; pay attention to what's going on around you and who is near you.
- Do not allow someone to "use" your phone even if they stress urgency. Offer to call 911 for them once you are at a trusted location. You can also approach police, private building security or a DID Ambassador for assistance.
- Keep your phone in your pocket, bag or in a phone pouch; not in your hand where someone can quickly grab it from you.
- Have your phone close to you. Don't leave it on a table, desk or counter in a public place unattended – not even for a few seconds. Do not become distracted.
- Use a password to protect your phone. It will make it more difficult for a thief to use your phone or access the information you have stored in it.
- Do not store any information on your phone that you wouldn't want others to see (e.g. bank and credit card account numbers or online passwords, personal information, etc.).
- Your cell phone provider may disable the phone remotely if it's stolen or lost.
- Back up the information on your cell phone. Most cell phone companies offer backup plans through their phone subscriptions.
- Download an "anti-theft" application. If your phone is lost or stolen you might be able to locate it, "wipe" it (remove the data from the phone) or make the phone useless to the thief. Contact your cell phone provider for more detailed information.
- Keep a written record of any of your electronic device's serial numbers in a safe place. Make note of those numbers when filing a police report; they are cross referenced with the Pawn System. However, YOU must file a report through either 911, 311 or on-line.
- For additional information or to request a personal safety workshop for a residence or business in the 1st precinct please contact: **renee.allen@minneapolismn.gov**