



# Frankfort Police News

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## Burglaries to Motor Vehicles- How Is This Happening and What Are We Doing About It?

It's past midnight and each Frankfort officer methodically drives through subdivisions in their assigned zone. We are searching. 'Searching for what', you may ask. Searching for the crews who periodically come into Frankfort to victimize our residents. We are looking for cars that look like they don't belong, brake lights, and garage doors left open. Occasionally, we come across a garage door left open. In that case, we notify the homeowner and sometimes they aren't thrilled we are waking them in the middle of the night. But we do, because if something happens to that resident or their property and we didn't notify them, we would see that incident as preventable.

We hear over the radio that a nearby town has a suspicious vehicle with an offender who was going into cars in their town. This immediately catches our attention and we listen. We listen to hear the vehicle's description, the direction they are heading, and then begin planning. We think- where might they enter our town based on the last known location of the vehicle? We listen to the radio while scanning license plates and vehicles to see if they did in fact come our way. We drive around on alert trying to make sure we are in the right place at the right time. The truth is that we can't be everywhere at once, so there is a chance they may come into our town and may get into some of our resident's cars. But we will give it our all to try and prevent this from happening.

By a stroke of luck or bad luck, depending on how you see things, we spot the vehicle in a subdivision in town a while later. As we approach the vehicle in our squad car, two people jump into the car and it takes off. We call over the radio: where we are, what we are seeing, and where the vehicle is heading. But the vehicle gets onto a main highway and is traveling at a high rate of speed. We assess. The vehicle now heads into on-coming traffic and increases their speed. We disengage. Why? As an officer, this goes against every instinct you have. But we must think. What happens if that vehicle crashes because we continue to pursue it? What if an innocent family gets hit by this car? And for what? A small amount of change that was stolen out of a vehicle in a nearby town.

This type of interaction occurs all too often.

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## Crime Statistics

### January through March 2018 vs. 2019

Type of Crime	Number of Calls 2018	Number of Calls 2019
DUI/Traffic Arrests	23	28
Retail Theft	8	6
Identity Theft	9	14
Theft	14	22
Burglary to Vehicle	15	26
Stolen Vehicles	4	5
Residential Burglary	0	2
Business Burglary	1	3

## Partnering to Increase School Safety

The Frankfort Police Department has always valued our partnership with School District 157-C. In the fall of 2019 we will begin a new endeavor to increase student, staff, and school safety. Officer Chad Riff has been assigned as 157-C's School District Resource Officer. Officer Riff's primary assignment during school days will be to provide additional security, safety presentations to both staff and students, and to mentor and encourage students. Officer Riff already has experience with 157-C students as a DARE officer. His experience in the field and in the school make Officer Riff a perfect fit for this position. Officer Riff will be attending various trainings this summer to prepare him for his new role.

In the beginning of 2019, the Frankfort Police Department provided advanced school threat response training to the staff members of 157-C. We were able to meet with the staff in each school and provide updated safety information. After the informational session staff participated in practical hands on exercises to simulate emergency response scenarios. Various members of the Frankfort Police Department helped to facilitate this training. We received positive feedback from the participating staff members. The Frankfort Police Department hopes to build on the skills taught to 157-C staff in future trainings.

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We do understand that being the victim of this type of crime is invasive. It is personal and unsettling. We continue to do our best and try to learn from each situation. **Here is what we know.**

There has been a significant increase of burglaries to motor vehicles in the Chicagoland Suburbs. These crimes are occurring far north, south, east, and west and right here in Frankfort.

There are multiple crews that go out with the intention of stealing. 'Stealing what', you may ask. Cars, firearms left in unsecured vehicles, change left in cars, etc.

**Are they selling the vehicles they steal?** No, we have recovered all the vehicles stolen in our town.

**What are they doing with the cars then?** They use the stolen vehicles to commit crimes. If someone obtains license plate information when they commit crimes, the crime cannot be linked to the offender(s).

**Are locked cars being broken into?** We have had only one instance where a vehicle was broken into during this rash of break-ins, but we believe this particular crime was not committed by one of these crews based on the details of how the crime occurred.

**What happens if these offenders come across a locked vehicle?** From the video surveillance footage, we have reviewed, the offenders can be seen leaving the driveway once they come across a locked vehicle.

**What are the Frankfort Police doing about this?** The Frankfort Police Department has been completing extra subdivision patrols during nighttime hours. We are sharing information with other police agencies to work together on these cases. When staffing allows, we have extra units dedicated to deterring, detecting, and apprehending offenders of burglary to motor vehicles. While we remain vigilant in our patrolling, we ask residents to lock their vehicles, to not leave keys or key fobs in their cars, and to report suspicious noises or vehicles to the police department immediately.

#### Other points of interest:

- We are constantly evaluating data from these cases and use this information for prevention and detection strategies.
- In some cases, the offenders have used garage door openers left in unsecured cars to gain access to garages.
- Thanks to the new sales tax referendum we are in the process of hiring additional officers, these officers will fill new directed patrol positions which will allow that officer to focus primarily on current crime trends and traffic issues.



Inevitably every spring law enforcement agencies observe an increase in certain types of scams specific to the spring. **Contractor scams** are seen as warm weather appears and spring showers or storms are experienced. In these scams contractors will solicit your home and offer you a great deal on some type of home repair. This can range from drive-way resurfacing to roof repair. Many times, this "great deal" includes cheap materials and homeowners are left with a mess. Or the contractor asks for a down payment and once they receive the down payment, are never seen again. Remember to ask for referrals when hiring someone for home repairs and to check with the Better Business Bureau.

Another scam seen this time of year is **Ruse Burglaries**. In this type of scam, someone goes to a homeowner's door and claims to be from a municipality, utility company or some other type of business. They attempt to lure the homeowner out of their home and distract them with information while standing on the side of the home or in the back yard. At the same time this is occurring, their partner goes through the homeowner's house and steals valuables. Remember, the police department always recommends residents verifying worker's information with the business or agency they claim to be from. All Frankfort employees wear identifiable clothing, have identification with them, and drive Village of Frankfort marked vehicles. Also, remember all solicitors (except for religious organizations) are required to register with the village. The Frankfort Police Department has "No Solicitation" stickers available for village residents free of charge. Not sure if something is a scam? Call us, we are happy to help.



Chief Burica and Officer Riff with the DARE essay contest winners and "Daren the Lion" at DARE graduation.



The Frankfort Police Department uses Nixle to periodically send out information and alerts to the community. We now can notify our residents of severe weather warnings, via National Weather Service (NWS) and we are able to receive anonymous tips through our Nixle program. The weather alerts are sent automatically by the national weather service. These warnings are often time sensitive and are set up this way to alert our community of severe weather. Therefore, alerts may be sent during overnight hours. Although at times inconvenient, it is imperative to utilize the weather warnings in the interest of public safety. Most other alerts and information are sent during daytime hours unless urgent. If you have not signed up for our Nixle alert system, you can text "FRANKFORT" to 888-777, or go to [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com).

*If you would like to leave an anonymous tip regarding suspicious activity or criminal behavior please text: TIP (enter your tip, example-suspicious vehicle near Rt.30 and Locust) to "888777". Please keep in mind that for an immediate response or an emergency, dial 911.*



Join us at our next  
"Coffee with a Cop"  
Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>

**Kohls**

11055 W Lincoln Hwy.  
9-10:30 a.m.

*No speeches, no agendas, just an opportunity to meet and talk to the men and women who serve your community.*



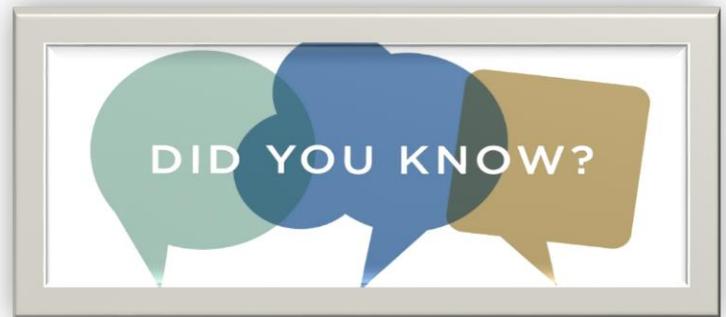
Join us for the Village of Frankfort's Open House on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5-7p.m.

Explore the various village buildings to include our very own police department.

At the police department we will be offering:

- *Police Department Tours*
- *Showcasing Our Police Vehicles*
- *And Will Allow Participants To Try Our New Shooting Simulator\**

\*This hands-on experience will simulate various police scenarios and give community members the opportunity to see what it is like to be a police officer!



The Frankfort Police Department can attend your homeowner's association, business, or organization meetings to provide community updates and safety information. We have presentations on:

Active Shooter Response Training, Identity Theft Information, Personal Safety, Security Surveys, and more! Just e-mail or call to request a presentation or presence at your meeting.

[Admin@frankfortpolice.net](mailto:Admin@frankfortpolice.net) or (815)469-9435

Meet Officer Dimitrios Kametas. Although he is new to Frankfort, he is not new to law enforcement.



Officer Dimitrios Kametas was hired by the Frankfort Police Department on 12/03/18. Officer Dimitrios attended the police academy in 2014 and worked for Evergreen Park and Hometown police departments after graduating from the police academy. Kametas explains, "I have always wanted to become a police officer since I was young". Kametas played basketball throughout high school and college and loves to be part of a team. He related that is what has drawn him to law enforcement. Being a police officer offers a familiar "team oriented" feeling and brotherhood.

Kametas feels the best part of being a police officer is the versatility. He loves to drive around and explore the town of Frankfort during each one of his shifts. Kametas enjoys the variation in calls and that nothing is ever "routine". He really has enjoyed getting know the town and its community members in his short time here. The Frankfort Police Department is glad to have Officer Kametas on our team.

## One Last Word on Scams-

Here is our "Is it a scam check list"- whether they call, e-mail, come to your home, or send you mail consult this checklist to determine if it's a scam.

- **Is there a sense of urgency?**  
*(arrest warrant, account closing, lack of services, etc.)*
- **Did they ask you to pay with a gift card or wire money?**  
*(it doesn't matter the card, businesses and agencies don't ask for payment via gift card)*
- **Does it seem too good to be true or seem unlikely?**  
*(verify information with the appropriate source, not the phone number they provide)*



**Frankfort Police**  
**STAY CONNECTED**



[www.frankfortpolice.net](http://www.frankfortpolice.net)



@FPDIL



@FPDIL



To Receive Frankfort Area Text Alerts:  
Text "FRANKFORT" to "888777"



Non-Emergency: (815)485-2500



Emergency: DIAL 911



*The Frankfort Police Department will be issuing a newsletter quarterly with up to date information on current crime trends, community events, and laws.*

*To get a copy of our newsletter go to [www.frankfortpolice.net](http://www.frankfortpolice.net).*