

Crime Reduction Activities December, 2008

The University of Cincinnati has taken many steps to ensure the safety of our students, both on and off campus. Over recent years these steps have resulted in a positive impact. Crime has been decreasing for the past four years. From 2003 through 2007, crime in the neighborhoods surrounding our campus has decreased 22%.

Compared to 10 similar urban universities, the rate of personal crimes per 1,000 people at UC is 0.63. That is well below the average rate for the group, which is 0.82. Property crime at UC occurs at a rate of 1.62 per 1,000, significantly below the property crime rate average at the peer institutions of 4.09.

The University of Cincinnati is working with the Cincinnati Police to try to identify the cause of recent criminal activity in the campus area and to develop response tactics to address it. Due to the recent increase in criminal activity, both agencies will be reviewing their practices as well as the accepted best practices from national police organizations to determine what we might do better.

The Cincinnati Police are using overtime funds to increase their patrol efforts in the neighborhoods. At times, this additional service has included squad cars on patrol and visible at all times on the blocks adjacent to campus, as well as undercover officers in the neighborhoods. University Police have been authorized to perform police duties off campus, and UC officers supplement the Cincinnati Police officers who patrol these neighborhoods. These efforts have resulted in the arrests of individuals who are committing some of these crimes.

Throughout the campus, UC Police have stationed Help Phones visible from any spot, with direct lines to the police center. UC Police have installed surveillance cameras to provide increasing coverage of the campus, and have initiated a telephone tip line – 556-COPS – to allow the University community to report suspicious activities.

In addition to the Cincinnati Police, the University also includes neighborhood community associations, business owners, landlords and our student government in a cooperative effort to enhance community safety in these neighborhoods.

The University of Cincinnati also provides an escort service, Nightwalk (<http://www.ucnightwalk.org/>) that students can access by calling 558-WALK (9255). The University offers is also the Bearcat Transportation System (http://www.uc.edu/af/facilities/shuttle_services.html) to provide shuttle buses that travel through the streets of the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, the University has contracted with Cincinnati's bus system, Metro, to allow all UC

students and employees to ride Metro buses for free (http://www.uc.edu/af/facilities/go_METRO.html).

UC Police have worked to educate the campus community on how to live safely in an urban environment. This educational outreach includes sessions at Orientation, in the Residence Halls and programs during Police Week. UC Police have also gone out into the community to distribute “Urban Living 101” doorhangers (http://www.uc.edu/pubsafety/documents/police_services/3178-Crime_Prev_DoorHanger.pdf). Door-to-door distribution of crime prevention tips before winter break in 2004 resulted in a 74 percent decrease in thefts and a 49 percent reduction in serious crime overall in the targeted neighborhoods.

UC Police also distribute information at university parking garages in another crime prevention reminder – the HABIT (Halt Auto Break-Ins Today) program.

The University exceeds the requirements of federal legislation in keeping the campus community informed about crimes on campus and in the surrounding area.

Working in collaboration with UC Student Government and the City of Cincinnati to improve lighting in the areas surrounding campus. One aspect of this effort involved working with the city to install brighter lighting along Uptown area streets. The University has also provided matching funds to expand a grant from City of Cincinnati Safe and Clean Streets program to install lighting on private houses in the area. So far over 100 additional lights have been installed.

The University has worked with the Clifton Heights-University Heights-Fairview (CUF) community council to accredit rental properties (http://www.uc.edu/pubsafety/documents/police_services/CUFLandlordAccreditationProgram.pdf). The review process includes a crime-prevention inspection.

Student safety is a primary consideration for the University of Cincinnati. Efforts to create a safer environment in and around campus earned city-wide recognition when the University of Cincinnati Police Department was presented the 2006 CPOP Partnering Award at the second annual Community Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP) Awards Banquet (<http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.asp?id=4717>). UC Police were recognized for partnership with officers from the Cincinnati Police District Five.

As always, innovative ideas are always welcome as the University works to ensure the safety of everyone in the UC Community. With the recent increase in crime reports from the surrounding community, the University has called upon Cincinnati Police and our neighborhood partners to explore additional strategies to improve safety in this area.