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Online Crime Reporting Now Available

By Cathy Tyson

Got crime? Lafayette and Orinda residents can now make online reports through the Sheriff's Office for non-emergencies where no suspect can be identified, for example: forgery, harassing phone calls, trespassing, vandalism, theft, vehicle theft, and fraudulent use of a credit card. But wait, there's more - citizens can also request vacation house checks, report illegal fireworks and file barking dog complaints.

"This gives the citizens of Orinda and Lafayette an opportunity to do their own report if there's no suspect. It's a convenience, but it will not affect our high level of service. We will still respond to calls for service. This is just another option," said Chief Bill French of Orinda.

This online system is not for emergencies that require an immediate police response. For any urgent situation, always dial 911.

"With less time spent writing reports, Deputies could devote more time to proactive policing. Our organizational culture demands timely and personal responses to calls from our citizens. While the use of the new program reduces personal contact, we must adjust to the debilitating loss of available staff," said Sheriff Warren Rupf referring to the recent budget reductions and staff cutbacks in a prepared statement.

The fill in the blank form is quite simple and easy to use, even this reporter could manage it. Go to www.cocosherriff.com and click "File Online Report Here." All reports are reviewed, the approved report will be sent back via email as a convenience. The report can be used to file an insurance claim, if needed. Moraga has its own police force, so it doesn't contract with the Sheriff's Office.

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