

## **Making Spokane the Safest City Our Size in America**

**Submitted by Maurece Vulcano, Spokane C.O.P.S.**

The Spokane Police Department continues to work towards the vision of making Spokane the safest city our size (population 175,000 to 225,000) in America, and has focused on repeat offenders in order to reduce Vehicle Prowling, Vehicle Theft, and Burglary 10% compared to the prior 5-year average.

Crime Analysis provided an analysis of vehicle prowling that continues to be a problem. Several hotspots identified for a high number of vehicles prowls/break-ins are, but not limited to, Gonzaga/Logan, North Hill, Emerson/Garfield, Lincoln Heights, Lower South Hill, Downtown, Shilo Hills, Neva-Wood, East Central.

Spokane C.O.P.S. shares Spokane Police Department's goal of reducing vehicle prowls. C.O.P.S. has ramped up the C.O.P.S. crime prevention programs by introducing the Latent Fingerprint Lift service to the community to help increase the solvability of prowled vehicles by processing those vehicles for latent fingerprints left behind by the suspect(s).

Fingerprint evidence remains the most positive means of personal identification in forensics to date. Though often compared with other modern innovations such as DNA, fingerprint evidence results in positive identifications whereas other evidence does not. Fingerprint evidence can also distinguish between identical twins. Identifications can be effected from fingerprints made in a victim's blood, paint, or other contaminants, which no other form of evidence can accomplish.

Spokane C.O.P.S. volunteers are trained to lift latent fingerprints off vehicles only. When a citizen reports to Crime Check at 456-2233 that their vehicle has been compromised by either prowling or vandalism, they will be asked if they would like to have a volunteer check for prints that may be left by the perpetrator. When the C.O.P.S. volunteer develops an area which appears to have several ridges, regardless of the size of the area, it will be lifted, marked, and submitted to the Police Forensic Unit for analysis.

For further information, go to <http://www.spokanecops.org/latent-fingerprint> or contact Spokane C.O.P.S. Administration at 835-4572.