



LANCASTER CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

City of Lancaster
Bureau of Police, 39 West Chestnut Street, Lancaster, Pa. 17603
www.lancasterpolice.com

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Contact Number: (717) 735-3300

Date: December 6, 2011

Crime Stoppers Release of Text Tips

The Lancaster City-County Crime Stoppers has launched a new, modern way for the community to report crimes anonymously by sending a text message. This is in addition to the current 800 number hotline.

TIP411, a company based out of St. Paul, Minnesota, provides an internet based tool that enables the public to text message an anonymous crime tip to Lancaster City-County Crime Stoppers, and to allow Crime Stoppers to respond back in an anonymous chat format.

Crime tips by text is guaranteed to be anonymous, as cell phone numbers are coded and scrambled once received at TIP411, with the crime tip forwarded to Crime Stoppers utilizing a combination of numbers and letters.

Anyone with text capabilities can send an anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers by following these steps:

1. Add TIP411 by typing 847411 to your phone contacts file.
2. In the "TO" block (who you are going to send it to), type in 847411.
3. Drop to your text box and type in LANCS followed by a space. Letters do not need to be case sensitive.
4. Then type in your crime tip and push send once your crime tip is complete.

** Please note that Text message charges may apply to your account, depending on the terms of service.

Once the crime tip is sent, you will receive a message from TIP411 indicating the message is received and forwarded to Crime Stoppers. Crime Stoppers can respond to the sender to ask for additional information. As in the case with the 800 number, crime tips received are forwarded to the appropriate police department. For anyone calling in an emergency they should always use 911.

Any questions regarding TIP411 should be directed to Sergeant Timothy Frey, Lancaster City Police, at 717-735-3481.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is it 100% anonymous?

a. Yes, none of the information exchanged over the system is logged so there is no way to track the originator of a text or web tip.



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2. What if the tip is related to an emergency or a situation where we need to find out who they are?
 - a. If it's clearly an emergency situation, direct them to call 911 immediately. Since the system is two way, you can converse via the text chat, but since its 100% anonymous they may choose not to provide any identifying information.
3. Can we issue a Subpoena to identify the tipster's information?
 - a. Since the tip originators information is not logged and it's 100% anonymous, there is no way to find that information out. However, you will have the actual tip(s) archived on the system if you need to produce it.
4. Can we contact the tipster again in the future?
 - a. Yes, at any time you can revisit a tip to reengage the tipster. They of course are not required to respond but you do have the opportunity to stay "tethered".

(end of release)