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SHERIFF'S OFFICE PARTNERS WITH BUSINESSES & RESIDENTS TO HELP SOLVE CRIMES THROUGH OPERATION WATCHDOG

Freehold Twp: Members of law enforcement throughout Monmouth County are partnering with businesses and residents to help solve crimes through Operation Watchdog. The modern day innovative, countywide program is a great initiative and led by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and Monmouth County Police Chiefs Association. Operation Watchdog enables business owners and residents to register their video surveillance systems with the sheriff's office in an effort to assist in and expedite criminal investigations.

"This is an extremely beneficial partnership from all ends since it increases safety and helps solve and reduce crimes more efficiently," said Sheriff Shaun Golden. "Surveillance cameras are crime fighting tools and registering them through Operation Watchdog saves members of law enforcement time when it comes to determining the location of video cameras which may contain valuable footage of criminal activity. I'm proud to launch another initiative where law enforcement and the community can work together for the greater good."

Monmouth County is the first county in the state to offer Operation Watchdog.

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The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office credits the Toms River Police Department, where Sheriff Golden was an officer for many years, for implementing the program on the local level. Operation Watchdog is voluntary and provides police with information on the locations of video surveillance cameras.

The information is safe, secure, not made public and police will not ask for direct or live access to a camera. Instead, they will reach out to the registered business or homeowner in the event that video is needed for an investigation.

“Operation Watchdog makes sense for everyone because it assists law enforcement in the development of evidence for criminal investigations. The program also helps local businesses and citizens protect themselves – a natural interest for our residents who want to help ensure the safety of their neighborhoods,” said Prosecutor Christopher J. Gramiccioni.

To register for Operation Watchdog, powered by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office in cooperation with the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and the Monmouth County Police Chiefs Association, please visit: operationwatchdog.mcsonj.org. The very first Monmouth County businesses to sign up for the program were iPlay America and Rook Coffee. With the Operation Watchdog announcement held at iPlay America on October 24, it's expected that many more business and residents will register for the program in the best interest of the community in which they live and work.

“iPlay America is proud to be a part of Operation Watchdog,” said Bob McDaid, Owner and Founder, iPlay America. “One of our core values as an organization is safety – not just within our facility, but within our community as well. This program allows us to further enhance our community involvement,”

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Registration is free, easy and takes a few minutes to complete. A registrant's contact information is provided along with the location of the cameras. Upon completion of the application, a member of law enforcement will follow up to confirm information. Information, that may not appear to mean much now, could be very useful should a crime occur.

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