



Office of
Ron Hickman, Constable
Precinct 4, Harris County
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COP-LINE PRESS RELEASE

Constable Ron Hickman is pleased to announce a new over the telephone incident reporting service called COP-LINE that will go into effect on April 4, 2011. This new service has two main goals. First, COP-LINE provides the citizens of Precinct Four a fast, convenient, and reliable means by which to file police reports for minor incidents where immediate follow up investigation is not necessary. Second, it increases the efficiency of patrol operations by allowing street deputies additional time to focus on proactive patrol and response to more serious incidents.

Incidents that are eligible to be reported using COP-LINE include, but are not limited to, lost or stolen property, minor thefts, telephone harassment, gas drive offs, and other non-violent property crimes. In addition the following general criteria must be met:

- Must be a criminal offense or otherwise reportable incident. (Excluding Traffic accidents)
- Must have occurred within the boundaries of the Constable Harris County Precinct 4.
- Suspect is not on-scene or no suspect information
- No injury or imminent threat of injury or harm to anyone involved
- No physical evidence to be collected at the scene
- There is no scene to preserve or no need to preserve the scene of the incident for evidentiary purposes.

COP-LINE gives the caller the opportunity to speak directly to a deputy constable. The deputy will evaluate the incident and determine whether the report meets the criteria to be taken over the telephone or would be better handled by dispatching a patrol deputy to the caller's location. If the call meets the requirements for COP-LINE, the deputy will collect the information over the phone that is necessary to generate an offense report. The caller will then be provided a case number for his or her records which may be used to obtain a copy of the report if needed.

Constable Hickman developed COP-LINE as a means by which to maintain the level of service expected of his department despite the recent budget cuts to Precinct Four. With fewer patrol deputies on the street as the result of the budget cuts, making the most of available resources is a necessity. COP-LINE provides an alternative means to handle minor report calls quickly and efficiently over the phone, saving time, fuel, and other expenses that are associated with dispatching a deputy to the scene. Patrol resources are freed up to allow the street deputies to respond to more serious incidents and to provide proactive patrol services in an effort to thwart criminals and prevent crime in community.

The pilot program will begin on April 4th, 2011 and will be available Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 10:30pm. To use COP-LINE, callers may contact the Constable's office at 281-376-3472 as they normally would and request to make a report over the telephone. The caller will be transferred to a constable deputy who will assist them.