



Community Resource
Development

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LET'S DO
OPERATION
IDENTIFICATION

A PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
4-H/CRD YOUTH AGAINST
CRIME PROJECT
MANUAL

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OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

Manual Prepared By

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PREFACE

The material contained in this publication is but one example of how spirited and concerned 4-H youth can become involved in the fight against crime.

Initially conducted in 1983, this Prince William County effort proved to be not only popular, but also beneficial. The youth involved, the law enforcement agencies who participated, and the senior citizens who allowed the 4-Hers to engrave their personal property as a community service all gained as a result of this project.

In light of Prince William County's success, a decision was made to publish the manual for statewide distribution in the 4-H/CRD Resource Notebook for Youth. It is our hope that other Extension units and other civic-minded 4-Hers will become involved in the fight against crime.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors of this manual would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous support and zeal they received from various citizens throughout the greater community of Prince William for this project.

Special appreciation and thanks is extended to the TRYACTION Crime Prevention Board of Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park. Organized in November, 1982 as a volunteer effort, the TRYACTION (Tri-Regional Youth Against Crime Together in Our Neighborhoods) Board discussed the need for educational programs aimed at improving youth awareness of crime, as well as the role youth can play in crime prevention. Much of the text that follows is reflective of the TRYACTION Board's input, counsel, as well as technical assistance. As a token of our esteem and appreciation, we salute the TRYACTION Crime Prevention Board.

MEMBERS OF THE TRYACTION CRIME PREVENTION BOARD

Janet Freeman, Manassas Mall, Chairperson

Purcell Conway, Northern Virginia Community College, Woodbridge

Mary Ann Crone, Extension Technician, Prince William County

Rob Forker, Prince William County Police Department

Jim Garrison, Manassas City Police Department

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WHAT OPERATION IDENTIFICATION IS

Operation Identification or Operation ID, is a burglary prevention program citizens can use in the privacy of their homes and business to help take a bite out of crime. Originally developed in 1963 by the Monterrey Park, California Police Department, Operation ID has grown into a nation-wide program of burglary prevention and stolen property identification/recovery through the permanent engraving of individual property with a personal identification number or code. In communities where it has been properly implemented, Operation Identification has become an effective burglary deterrent.

WHY WE NEED OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

According to national crime statistics, burglary is the most frequently committed and reported crime in the United States. According to records maintained by the Department of State Police, burglary is also the most frequently committed and reported crime in Virginia. During 1981, the most recent year that statewide statistics are available, 63,350 burglaries were reported in the Commonwealth. This meant that over 177 burglaries were committed and reported for each day of 1981. On a daily basis this meant that a burglary was committed and reported in Virginia once every eight minutes throughout all of 1981!

Of the 63,350 reported burglaries for 1981, 42,291 involved homes and residences and 21,059 involved stores and businesses. Over thirty-eight percent of the home burglaries took place during the day, while thirty-five percent took place at night. Burglaries involving stores and businesses occurred primarily at night.

ACTIVITY I. - HOW MANY BURGLARIES WERE COMMITTED

AND REPORTED IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

DURING 1982? _____. HOW
MANY OF THE BURGLARIES INVOLVED
HOMES? _____.

HOW MANY BURGLARIES WERE COMMITTED
AND REPORTED IN MANASSAS DURING
1982? _____. HOW MANY OF
THE BURGLARIES INVOLVED HOMES?
_____.

HOW MANY BURGLARIES WERE COMMITTED AND
REPORTED IN MANASSAS PARK DURING 1982?
_____. HOW MANY OF THE BURGLARIES
INVOLVED HOMES? _____.

In addition to being the most frequently committed and reported crime, burglary is also the most costly from a monetary standpoint. In 1981 for example, the total value of goods stolen in Virginia burglaries was estimated to be \$43,642,237. Viewed from a more personal perspective, the value of property stolen was the equivalent of every man, woman, and child in Virginia having property stolen during 1981 that was valued at slightly more than eight dollars (per capita). In recognition of these high costs, as well as the fact that burglary in many instances is a crime of opportunity due to unlocked doors and the like, the need for citizen involvement in preventing the opportunity for burglary through the marking of property becomes clear.

ACTIVITY II. - WHAT WAS THE MONETARY VALUE OF ALL
GOODS STOLEN IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
BURGLARIES FOR 1982? _____.

WHAT WAS THE MONETARY VALUE OF ALL
GOODS STOLEN IN MANASSAS BURGLARIES
FOR 1982? _____.

WHAT WAS THE MONETARY VALUE OF ALL
GOOD STOLEN IN MANASSAS PARK BURGLARIES
FOR 1982? _____.

ACTIVITY III. - IS A PATTERN DISCERNABLE IN PRINCE
WILLIAM COUNTY RELATIVE TO WHERE
BURGLARIES WERE COMMITTED DURING
1982? _____

IS A PATTERN DISCERNABLE IN MANASSAS
RELATIVE TO WHERE BURGLARIES WERE
COMMITTED DURING 1982? _____

IS A PATTERN DISCERNABLE IN MANASSAS
PARK RELATIVE TO WHERE BURGLARIES
WERE COMMITTED DURING 1982? _____

WHY OPERATION IDENTIFICATION IS EFFECTIVE

Operation Identification has proven to be successful because it builds on the concept of ownership identification we have used for years in our society with animals (branding), cars (licenses), and the like. In much

the same way, Operation Identification can markedly improve the possibility of preventing a burglary, as well as recovering stolen property. There are at least five reasons why this is possible. They are as follows:

1. Theft is discouraged when potential burglars learn that valuables have been inscribed with a traceable serial number.
2. Law enforcement officials can identify the ownership of items in the possession of suspected burglars.
3. Conviction of a suspected burglar can be enhanced if the stolen goods in their possession are marked.
4. Recovered items can be identified, claimed, and returned to their legal owners more efficiently.
5. The disposing or selling of stolen property is much harder when the property is marked and can be easily traced and identified.

HOW OPERATION IDENTIFICATION WORKS

The Operation Identification program has three parts. The first part of the program involves the marking of property with an electric engraving tool that is available free of charge from the law enforcement agencies of Prince William County, Manassas or Manassas Park.

The second part of Operation ID consists of making a list of the valuables marked and keeping the list in a safe and secure place. Home safes or security boxes available at banks are commonly used. The list of property marked will serve as an important aid in describing any stolen property.

Once property has been marked and a list made, the participant in Operation Identification is ready for the third and easiest part of the

program. This final step is the displaying of Operation Identification stickers, which are available free of charge from local law enforcement agencies, on doors and windows which a burglar might try and use for entry. This step in the program is very important because it alerts the burglar that the property inside has been marked. This action will deter many burglars because marked property is harder to sell than unmarked property.

ACTIVITY IV. - VISIT YOUR LOCAL POLICE STATION TO
FIND OUT WHAT PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE
WHICH WILL HELP CITIZENS PROTECT THEIR
PROPERTY. LIST AND EXPLAIN. _____

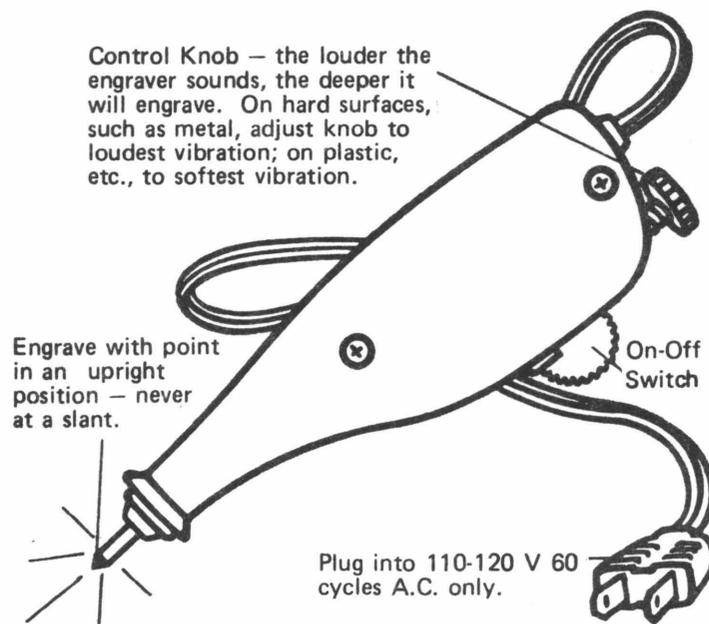
ACTIVITY V. - IN YOUR OWN WORDS, DESCRIBE WHY OPERATION
IDENTIFICATION AND OTHER PROPERTY PROTECTION PROGRAMS ARE IMPORTANT AND USEFUL.

CONDUCTING OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

Participation in Operation Identification begins with the engraving of property. Law enforcement agencies strongly urge Operation ID participants to use their Virginia Driver's License number when marking valuables. The Driver's License number is used because it is traceable throughout the Commonwealth, as well as across state lines. A typical engraving would look like this: VA000-00-000.

When marking the property, care should be taken to engrave on an area that cannot be easily dismantled or removed. Law enforcement personnel also suggest that the engraving, if possible, be done so that it can be seen by the potential burglar. This may help deter the burglar at the final moment.

Prior to initiating Operation ID in the community, each 4-H participant will receive "engraver" training and will be required to mark their personal property. In this way, participants will become familiar with the engraving tool, as well as ensure that their property is marked. The major components of the engraver are noted below:



It is recognized that property such as jewelry and antiques cannot be marked because of size or because marking would greatly detract from the property's value. In cases like this, law enforcement officials suggest that photographs be taken of the property and information regarding the property be written on the back of the picture. The photographs should be stored in a safe place along with the lists that are developed for the engraved property.

Lastly, each 4-H participant will want to keep in mind the following steps when conducting Operation Identification:

1. Always practice before using the engraver.
2. Be sure to engrave the complete Operation ID number every time.
3. Be sure to engrave the property in such a manner that the number will not be removeable.
4. Identify your property as conspicuously as possible without defacing it.
5. When engraving, hold the tool straight up and not down at a slant.
6. Remember that the engraver has a depth adjuster. The louder the engraver sounds, the deeper it will engrave. This distinction will be important for soft surfaces.
7. Make a record of the property marked and store it in a safe place.
8. Place Operation ID decals on the doors and windows to warn potential thieves.

THE OPERATION IDENTIFICATION MARKING GUIDE

In conducting Operation Identification, use the following Marking Guide in determining where best to engrave the property. Law enforcement

officials suggest that a list of all property marked be prepared and stored along with any photographs of valuables that could not be marked in a secure place. Safe deposit boxes are strongly recommended.

ITEM	MARKING METHOD	*LOCATION	CHECK IF MARKED
Adding Machines	Engraver		
Appliances	Engraver		
Toasters	Engraver		
Blenders	Engraver		
Car Battery	Engraver		
Battery Chargers	Engraver		
Hub caps	Engraver		
Car Radios	Engraver		
Musical Instruments	Engraver		
Projectors	Engraver		
Slide Trays	Engraver		
Projection Screens	Engraver		
Vacuum Cleaners	Engraver		
Clocks	Engraver		
Electric Razors	Engraver		
Typewriters	Engraver		

*The items listed above can usually be marked with an engraver on the back, underneath, on a side or in the rear--whenever space allows. It's best to mark on a nonremovable metal portion of the item. Be sure not to mark on a lid or easily removable cover plate.

ITEM	MARKING METHOD	LOCATION	CHECK IF MARKED
Binoculars	Engraver	Underneath on center post.	
Cameras	Engraver	Inside, on frame not on cover.	
Lens	Engraver	On rim if desired.	
Fishing Reels	Engraver	On side.	
Fishing Rods	Engraver	On handle, metal surfaces most desirable.	
Garden Tools	Engraver	Metal tools or metal surfaces most desirable.	
Golf Clubs	Engraver	On shaft.	
Golf Cart	Engraver	On frame.	
Guns	Engraver	Marking these items is optional since the numbers are already recorded. If marking is desired, the butt area or under side of barrel should be considered.	
Watches	Engraver	On back.	
Rings	Engraver	Inside ring if space is available.	
Bracelets	Engraver	Inside or on back as space allows.	
Lawn Mowers	Engraver	On handle, frame, or cover.	
Outboard Motors	Engraver	Inside on frame or outside above propeller.	
Radios and Tape Recorders	Engraver	Mark in at least two places inside, on the chassis, underneath, and on the back if space allows. If the machine is removable from a portable case, the case should also be marked.	
Television Sets	Engraver	Remove the back cover safely, mark the chassis and the back of the cabinet.	

ITEM	MARKING METHOD	LOCATION	CHECK IF MARKED
Record Players	Engraver		
Sewing Machines	Engraver		
Baseball Bat	Engraver	On lower handle.	
Ice and Roller Skates	Engraver	On runners, or underneath on frames.	
Weight Equipment	Engraver	On barbell plates and on bars.	
Sport Bows	Engraver	On inside frame of bow.	
Tennis Rackets	Engraver	On handle of racket.	
Bicycles	Engraver	On bars or frames and rim of each wheel.	
Hammer	Engraver	On head.	
Wrench	Engraver	On handle.	
Sockets	Engraver	Near size indication.	
Saw	Engraver	On grip or shaft, not on blade.	
Electric Drills and Other Electric Tools	Engraver	On cast housing.	
Other Shop Equipment Such As Table Saws, Drill Presses, Air Compressors, Torches	Engraver	Twice, once near serial number, once on side.	

ACTIVITY VI. - ENGRAVE YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY
WITH YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE NUMBER.
LIST THE PROPERTY ENGRAVED AND
THE DATE OF THE ENGRAVING.

PROPERTY

DATE

PROPERTY

DATE

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION INVENTORY FORM

Once property has been marked, law enforcement officials recommend that Operation Identification participants develop an inventory or record, of the property marked. The final entry in this manual is a sample Operation ID owner's inventory form. The form has space for recording the article, its make, model number, color, manufacturer serial number, as well as when the property was actually marked. Such a record would help the police in trying to locate property stolen. In addition, such a list would be helpful with an insurance company following a burglary or natural disaster. Obviously, the property inventory form should be kept in a safe place.

ACTIVITY VII. - DETAIL INFORMATION REGARDING

YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH OPERATION

ID IN THE COMMUNITY. _____

ACTIVITY VIII. - LIST THE DATES AND TITLES
OF ANY TALKS, DEMONSTRATIONS
OR EXHIBITS YOU HAVE PREPARED
OR GIVEN TO CLUBS, GROUPS OR
ORGANIZATIONS ON CRIME PREVEN-
TION. _____

ACTIVITY IX. - LIST TEN SECURITY TIPS (FIVE
FOR AUTO AND FIVE FOR HOME)
THAT YOU WOULD RECOMMEND TO
PEOPLE FOR PERSONAL PROTECTION.

AUTO

HOME

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

NOTES

