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Date: Friday, November 20, 2026 at 3:05:39 PM Mountain Standard Time
From: Oro Valley Police Department
To: Michael@ILoveOV.com

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This issue:

- Happy Holidays from OVPD
- 2026 Holiday Scams
- OVPD Citizen Academy
- Dark House Program
- Question & Answer

Happy Holidays from OVPD

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As another year draws to a close, everyone at the Oro Valley Police Department would like to express our genuine appreciation for the incredible backing we receive from our residents. Whether it's kind words passed along to our officers, donations dropped off at the station, thank you cards from local students, or the thousands of hours put in by our Citizen Volunteer Assistant Program (CVAP) members, your involvement means the world to us. Every single gesture makes an impact.

Here are a few highlights and milestones from our work together this year:

- **Safest Cities Recognition:** In January, SafeWise released its annual report ranking Arizona's top 10 safest cities, and Oro Valley was right there on the list once again—boasting the lowest violent crime rate in the state and the third-lowest property crime rate, based on FBI statistics per 1,000 residents. This recognition is a testament to OVPD's relentless pursuit of reducing crime and protecting the quality of life we all enjoy in Oro Valley.

- **Targeted Retail Theft Operations:** In May, our detectives, Community Action Team, and patrol officers teamed up for another organized retail theft (ORT) sting

targeting businesses dealing with ongoing losses. Over the two-day effort, officers checked 21 individuals and made 13 arrests, securing multiple felony and misdemeanor charges for theft, narcotics, and outstanding warrants. Proactive details like these help protect local businesses, hold repeat offenders accountable, and curb property crime.

- **Proactive Traffic Safety:** Our team kept a strong focus on roadway safety this year through targeted enforcement details. For example, a large-scale multi-agency traffic crackdown in late October 2026 led to more than 300 stops and citations designed to clamp down on dangerous driving along our main corridors.
- **Record-Breaking National Night Out:** In late October, we hosted our annual National Night Out at the Oro Valley Marketplace alongside fantastic community partners like Lisa Bayless Realty, Waste Management, Walmart, Tucson Electric Power, Sunstate Equipment, Southwest Gas, and Pima Federal Credit Union. The event featured over 55 partner displays, food trucks, two helicopters, an obstacle course courtesy of the Army National Guard, dozens of raffle prizes, and plenty of candy. Thanks to our community, we had a record turnout of over 8,000 people!
- **Active Community Outreach:** The Community Resources Unit has stayed exceptionally busy. This year, we hosted two Citizens Academies (spanning 24 weeks total), a summer Teen Academy with 40 students, and six Dispose-A-Med collections that safely removed over 700 pounds of unused medications. We also held six R.A.D. women's self-defense courses, four Start Your Engines women's automotive classes, and delivered more than 30 crime prevention presentations for local HOAs, businesses, and neighborhoods. Beyond that, our team completed 30 car seat safety checks, managed over 400 Dark House checks and 50 Neighborhood Watch groups, and supported 42 special events like triathlons, festivals, and concerts. To top it all off, our CrimeFighter Newsletter now reaches over 30,000 readers per issue!

We wish you and your families a safe, warm, and Happy Holidays!

2026 Holiday Scams



As the holiday shopping rush ramps up, criminals are finding new ways to exploit the season's excitement and steal consumers' financial information. Visa's 2026 Holiday Fraud Trends report highlights how scammers leverage the surge in online activity—from gift shopping and tracking deliveries to donating to favorite causes—to target unsuspecting consumers.

From shopping for gifts to tracking packages and giving back, the holidays bring a massive spike in online activity. Unfortunately, that same activity creates fertile ground for fraudsters.

Here are five common scams you should watch out for this holiday season:

- **Fake Online Stores & Shopping Scams** — Fraudsters create convincing websites and social media ads offering hard-to-find products or unbelievable discounts. Consumers may pay for items that never arrive or receive counterfeit goods instead. Watch out for extreme discounts, unfamiliar retailers, and high-pressure tactics urging you to buy quickly. We recommend researching unfamiliar websites, checking independent reviews, and manually entering a retailer's official URL rather than clicking ads or suspicious links.
- **Package-Delivery ScamsScams —** Package-delivery scams spike heavily during the holidays. Fraudsters send texts or emails claiming there is a problem with a shipment, often asking you to click a link, pay a fee, or verify personal information. These links may download malware, while any information shared

can be used for identity theft or additional fraud. Watch for unexpected delivery alerts, requests for payment, and links sent directly by text message. Avoid clicking links received from unknown phone numbers.

- **Charity Scams —** End-of-year charitable giving brings another risk, as scammers know people are more generous during the holidays. Fake charities and fraudulent fundraising appeals often use emotional stories and urgent requests to encourage immediate donations. Watch for pressure to donate immediately and organizations that cannot be verified through trusted charity-monitoring resources like Charity Navigator. Never feel pressured to make a donation!
- **Gift Card Scams** — Gift cards and prepaid cards remain one of the most common payment methods requested by fraudsters posing as businesses, charities, technical-support representatives, or even family members. Watch for anyone asking you to purchase gift cards to pay a bill, fee, or emergency expense.
- **AI Voice-Cloning Scams —** Modern artificial intelligence tools allow criminals to easily mimic the voice of a friend or family member. Victims may receive a call that sounds precisely like a loved one claiming to be in trouble and urgently needing money. Watch for emotional requests for cash, demands for secrecy, or intense pressure to act immediately. Verify before sending money to anyone!

Top Three Tips for Staying Safe:

1. **Pause** before clicking links, sending money, purchasing gift cards, or sharing personal information.
2. **Verify** unexpected requests through trusted websites, apps, or official phone numbers.
3. **Protect** your accounts by monitoring transactions closely and promptly reporting suspicious activity.

For more information and to view the complete report, visit:
https://corporate.visa.com/content/dam/VCOM/corporate/visa-perspectives/security-and-trust/documents/holiday-threats-report-2026.pdf

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OVPD Citizen Academy



One of the flagship programs offered by the Oro Valley Police Department is the Citizen Academy, an immersive 12-week classroom course designed to give residents an insider's look at local law enforcement.

The Citizen Academy is a comprehensive program that provides participants with a firsthand understanding of police operations, community policing strategies, and department resources. The curriculum covers a wide array of fascinating topics—including criminal investigations, patrol functions, records, K-9 units, SWAT, Bomb Squad, traffic enforcement, and DUI investigations.

Classes are taught directly by sworn officers and department personnel, offering attendees a unique opportunity to learn the realities of police work from the professionals themselves. The program features engaging presentations, discussions, and demonstrations suitable for community members of all backgrounds. The program is open to applicants who are at least 18 years of age.

Graduates leave the academy with heightened awareness, valuable insights into town safety, and a deeper connection to the men and women of OVPD.

We are now registering for our Spring 2027 session, which will be on Tuesday nights from January 26 through April 20. For more information or to submit an application, visit www.ovpd.org and click on “Popular Programs and Services”.

Dark House Program



Are you leaving for an extended period of time? Headed out of town for the holidays? Dark House is one of our most popular programs at the Oro Valley Police Department. This program allows Oro Valley residents to register their unoccupied home to be checked by members of our Citizen Volunteer Assistants Program (CVAP) on a regular basis while they are out of town or on vacation for **at least 14 days**.

The primary purpose of this program is to offer vacationing, seasonal, and year-round residents the reassurance that if a problem arises at their property, such as suspicious activity, utility emergencies, or other emergency conditions, the resident or their designated keyholder can be contacted quickly. As frequently as staffing allows, CVAP members will check the exterior of your home for any concerns and will notify you if any are found.

Registration is 100% online and completely free! Visit www.ovpd.org and click on "Popular Programs and Services" for more information and to register your home. Once registered, you will receive an email confirmation.

Question & Answer



Have you ever wanted to ask a police officer a question but never had the opportunity to do so? Ever wondered why a cop did what they did? Have a question about traffic? Here is your chance to send in your questions, and we may publish them with an answer from an officer with expertise in that area.

Jim from Oro Valley asks: Does Arizona have a law that says slower drivers should stay in the right lane? I get irritated with the drivers in the far left lane that just hang out and force everyone else to pass on the right. I've lived in several other states and never experienced the problem that I've seen here.

Answer: Yes, A.R.S. 28-721(b) states that on all roadways, a person driving a vehicle less than the normal speed of traffic shall drive in the right-hand lane or as close to the right-hand curb as possible. The only exception to this is when a vehicle is overtaking and passing another vehicle traveling in the same direction, or when making a left turn at an intersection or driveway. Notice that the law says, "normal speed of traffic". This verbiage means that even if you are traveling at the speed limit in the left lane and there is someone behind you trying to pass, you are still legally obligated to move to the right. The reason for this law is not for convenience sake but for safety; vehicles driving slower in the left lane impede the flow of traffic and encourage unsafe passing on the right.

Skip from Oro Valley asks: What is the proper way to merge when you're entering a construction zone? In other states, people seem to know how to merge efficiently, but here in Arizona it seems like everyone gets in one lane two miles back and then gets upset when you try to pass them.

Answer: When approaching a lane closure, the most efficient method is called the **zipper merge**. Rather than immediately getting into the open lane as soon as you see a "Lane Closed Ahead" sign, drivers should continue using **both lanes up to the designated merge point**.

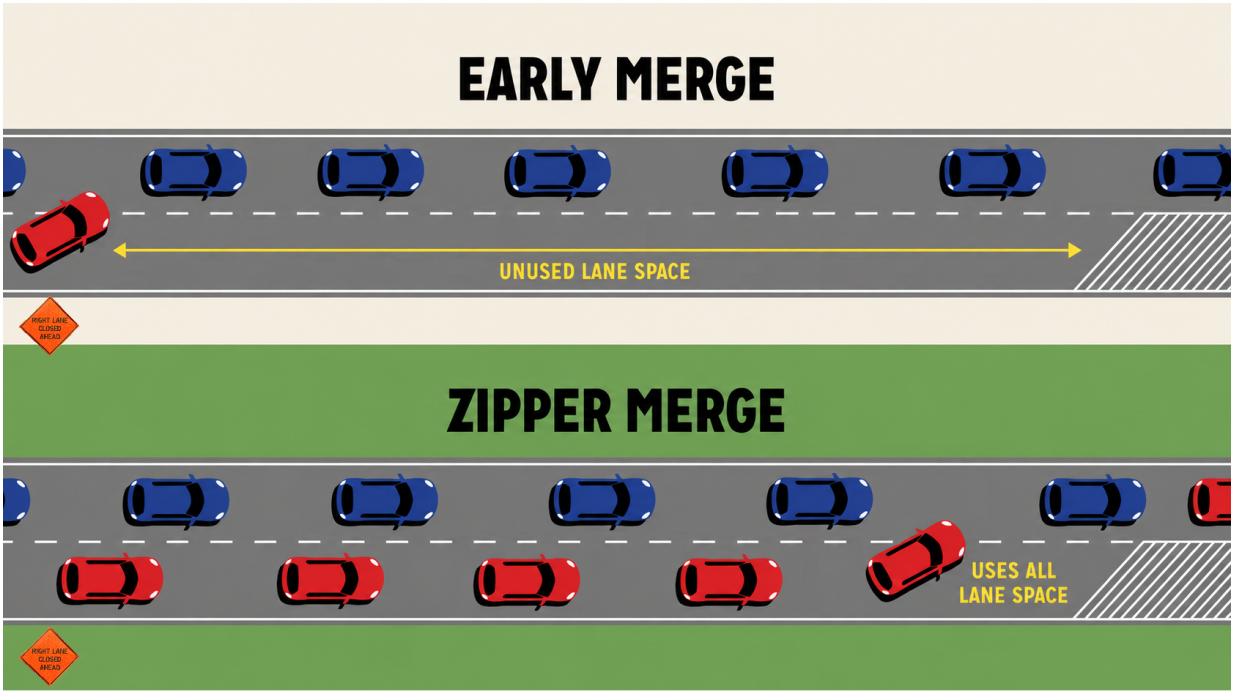
At the merge point, drivers should take turns—one vehicle from the open lane, followed by one vehicle from the closing lane—just like the teeth of a zipper coming together.

The zipper merge helps use all available roadway space, reduces the length of traffic backups, and keeps vehicles moving more efficiently. When drivers merge too early, one lane can become backed up for a considerable distance while the other lane remains unused. Drivers who continue in the open lane to the merge point may appear to be "cutting in line," but they are actually using the roadway correctly.

A few things to remember:

- **Use both lanes** until you reach the merge point.
- **Maintain a safe and consistent speed** rather than racing ahead.
- **Take turns at the merge point**—one vehicle from each lane.
- **Leave enough space** for another vehicle to merge safely.
- **Follow all signs, flaggers, and traffic-control devices** in the construction zone.

The zipper merge works best when everyone participates. Using both lanes and taking turns at the merge point can help reduce backups and make construction zones safer and more efficient for everyone.



If you have a question you would like to submit, email it to CRU@orovalleyaz.gov**.**

Crime Statistics (August – October 2026)

The following statistics are provided to inform citizens of criminal activity occurring in your community.

	Aug	Sept	Oct
Total Calls for Service	1358	1329	1356
Homicides	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0
Assaults	9	9	9
Burglaries	0	1	0
Thefts	69	44	44
Vehicle Thefts	0	2	0
Recovered Stolen Vehicles	0	1	0
DUI	19	11	13
Drug Offenses	31	26	23
Total Arrests	136	108	134
Residential Alarms	57	27	41
Business Alarms	40	35	30
First Aid Calls	46	47	47
Fatal Collisions	0	0	0
Collisions	48	56	53
Traffic Citations	251	297	311

Upcoming Events

TOV Shred Event
Date: Saturday, November 21, 2026
Time: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Location: Oro Valley Marketplace (11785 N. Oracle Road, near Happy Joe's Pizza)
Details: Each vehicle can bring up to 8 medium-sized boxes that will be shredded on site for FREE!

OV Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration
Date: Saturday, December 6, 2026
Time: 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Location: Oro Valley Marketplace (11785 N. Oracle Road, near Fork & Fire)
Details: Come enjoy this annual event with over 150 artisan booths, food trucks, carolers, holiday-themed performances on the main stage, activities for kids, free pictures with Santa, and lighting of the 35-foot tree at 6 p.m.!

Sign Up for CrimeFighter Newsletter!

If you would like to automatically receive the CrimeFighter Newsletter via email every month, scan the QR code below or click HERE to sign up. Remember to select the "Public Safety & Crime Prevention" box.

Alternatively, you can sign up by going to the Town of Oro Valley website (orovalleyaz.gov), click on the News tab, and click on "Subscribe to get news and event updates". Remember to select the "Public Safety & Crime Prevention" box.