



Auburn Police Department

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STOP-A-THEFT: AUBURN POLICE EMBARK ON ANTI-SHOPLIFTING CAMPAIGN

AUBURN, ME – The Auburn Police Department is embarking on an anti-shoplifting campaign. The reason behind this initiative: shoplifting numbers are skyrocketing, and local retailers are asking for help.

“In the first five months of 2018, we have seen an 84% increase in shoplifting thefts as compared to the first five months of 2017,” said Chief Phil Crowell. “Local businesses are looking to us to help find solutions.”

“Auburn is a very safe place to live with a rather low occurrence of violent crime but, shoplifting is driving our crime rate,” said Deputy Chief Jason Moen. Auburn’s role as a regional service center also seems to be a driving factor.

In 2017, only 25% of the adults arrested for shoplifting were Auburn residents. 40% of the arrested adults were from Lewiston and 31% were from other Maine towns. The remaining 4% were from out of state.

As with any issue, collaboration is one key to success. At a meeting last month with some of Auburn’s largest retailers, APD staff outlined concerns with the growing shoplifting rate. “These retailers are willing to work with us to try and lower the occurrences,” said Moen. “So, moving forward, businesses will be taking preventative measures and the Auburn Police will be taking a ‘zero tolerance’ stance on shoplifting.”

Anyone caught shoplifting in Auburn stores will be arrested and transported to the Androscoggin County Jail. Once a week, the Auburn PD will post booking photos on their Facebook page for the world to see.

“Shoplifting is not a victimless crime. Millions of dollars in property is lost every year to shoplifting and we will do our best to prevent it,” said Crowell. “We want people to know that Auburn is open for business but closed to shoplifting.”