



# KENTWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT

RICHARD ROBERTS | CHIEF OF POLICE

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Kentwood Police Department's Operation P.R.I.C.E. Continues Holiday Theft Prevention Measures**

*Annual Program Educates Retailers on How to Handle Shoplifters and Reduce Retail Fraud*

**Kentwood, Michigan, Nov. 27, 2019** – The Kentwood Police Department will again partner with local store owners to prevent retail theft this holiday season through Operation P.R.I.C.E., an educational program that has helped area retailers reduce crime during the holidays since 2014.

Operation P.R.I.C.E., which stands for Preventing Retail Theft Through Initiative, Collaboration and Enforcement, takes a proactive approach involving education and open communication with business owners and their employees in preparation for the busy holiday season.

Kentwood Police educate retailers on how to discourage shoplifting, how to identify potential crime and what to do when a shoplifter is caught. The partnership also includes an increased police presence in and around the community's prime retail destinations, assigning plain-clothed officers to businesses targeted for organized retail crime. Additionally, participating retailers display posters and signs declaring their partnership with the Kentwood Police Department.

"Collaboration with business owners and employees early on is integral to the success of the program," Kentwood Police Chief Richard Roberts said. "The sooner our officers can make personal connections with employees and equip them with knowledge about how to reduce retail fraud, the better we can ensure employees feel confident about spotting suspicious activity and calling us for assistance.

"Our education efforts along with a larger police presence and the visibility of retailers' partnerships with us has had a proven track record in helping local businesses decrease incidents of retail fraud."

Operation P.R.I.C.E. was first launched by the Kentwood Police Department in an effort to curb retail theft along the 28th Street corridor, but has since grown beyond 28th Street in recent years, extending to 29th Street and doubling in participating businesses to more than 60.

Initially, calls for police services increased, resulting in more retail fraud arrests as store owners and employees used police as a resource. Since the program began, police have seen retail theft decrease during the holiday season.

“Operation P.R.I.C.E. continues to be a highly successful initiative not only for our department, but for the community as a whole,” Roberts said. “The relationships we have built and the knowledge we’ve imparted to our partners within the City’s business districts have helped to create a positive and safe shopping experience for those who live in and visit our City during the holiday season.”

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