



**"iGotcha"**  
**Criminal Justice &  
Public Safety  
County of Prince George**



**Hopewell - Prince George  
CRIME SOLVERS, INC.**

P.O. Box 25, Hopewell, Virginia 23860 • (804) 541-2202 • (804) 733-2777



June 2011

VACo Achievement Awards

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



## 2011 Achievement Awards

ATTN: 2011 Achievement Awards Program  
Virginia Association of Counties  
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300  
Richmond, Va. 23219-3627

### Call for Entries



## 2011 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2011

### Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2011.

#### Program Information

Locality Prince George County  
Program Title "igotcha" Anonymous Tip Text  
Program Category 4. Criminal Justice & Public Safety  
Population Category (3) 30,001 to 50,000

#### Contact Information

Name Nick Wilder  
Title Detective  
Department Police Department  
Complete Mailing Address 6600 Courthouse Road, Prince George, VA 23875  
Telephone # (804) 733-2773 Fax # (804) 733-2658  
E-mail nwilder@princegeorgeva.org

#### Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Percy C. Ashcraft  
Title County Administrator  
Signature\*

\*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

## **"iGotcha" Program Overview**

**Program is an anonymous text-a-tip to increase information received about crimes.**

**Program is regional collaboration that has been funded through private business donations.**

**Program is targeted at youth, who are more likely to text.**

**Program received viable tip within four days of use. Program has been active for three months.**

The Hopewell / Prince George Crime Solvers program is located in South Central Virginia. This organization serves the city of Hopewell and the county of Prince George with a combined population of 59,123. This program assist with operating a system in which citizens can anonymously report information related to criminal activity. This program works in conjunction with the law enforcement agencies for both jurisdictions.

A need for this text-a-tip service was identified as an avenue to reach the younger generation of each locality by utilizing the capabilities of cellular phone technology. This target group was identified as a viable means of obtaining information in reference to criminal activity. The use of this system would provide an alternate means of obtaining information as apposed to the existing tip line, which uses a conventional telephone line.

This text-a-tip service originated as an idea by the members of the Hopewell / Prince George Crime Solvers in conjunction with the Prince George County and Hopewell Police Departments in January of 2011. A committee was formed to research the program and a determination was made to implement the service. The Prince George County High School's marketing class was utilized as a focus group for identifying ways to market the program to the younger generation. The students had direct involvement in designing the brochure, flyer, poster, and the banner for the text-a-tip program. The program was unveiled on April 9, 2011.

Three goals were identified for this program. The first goal was to increase the effectiveness of the Crime Solver program as it relates to receiving tips. The second goal was to reach the younger generation of the community in obtaining information about criminal activity. The third was to provide an alternate means for citizens to report criminal activity while maintaining anonymity.

Three objectives were identified in helping this program reach its established goals. The first was to establish a marketing plan to promote the program. The second objective was to participate in public speaking engagements at local community events, civic and church organizations. The third was to develop a program in conjunction with the School Resource Officer activities at the local school systems.

The text-a-tip program operates by cellular text messaging and mobile application. A citizen can report criminal activity by sending “igotcha” with the text to 274637 (CRIMES). The text is sent to a computer server in Canada where the tipster’s phone information is removed and only shows as a code number to protect the anonymity. Canadian and Virginia law protects the identity of a Crime Solver tipster’s information. By having this server in Canada, it is like having a double layer of protection for the anonymity of the tipster. This information is sent to the Prince George County Emergency Communication Center for review. This process takes approximately four to eight seconds. If more information is needed about the tip, the Emergency Communication Center Officer can reply to the text to obtain further information. This allows for two-way communication, but still protects the anonymity of the tipster. This information is given to the law enforcement coordinator once it is received.

Financing for the service of this program was obtained from a business in Prince George County. The cost associated with the marketing of this program was provided by donations from the Hopewell / Prince George Crime Solvers and local businesses. The local media provided free advertisement as a community service. This service is being provided with no cost to the citizens of Prince George County or Hopewell.

The program is being staffed by members of the Prince George County Police Department in conjunction with the Hopewell / Prince George Crime Solvers. The Prince George County Emergency Communications Center receives the tip information. The Crime Solver coordinator, which is a Police Detective, reviews the tip information and serves as system administrator for the program.

In conclusion, the text-a-tip program has enhanced the Crime Solver program for both Prince George County and the city of Hopewell. It has provided an alternate means for citizens to anonymously report criminal activity and has improved the record keeping for the program. Less than one week after unveiling the system, it received the first tip related to a wanted subject.



Make **TEXT-A-TIP** Work for  
Hopewell/Prince George

After struggling for years with an anti-snitching culture that made witnesses too afraid to come forward, police across the country are getting help from text-a-tip programs that allow communities to send anonymous, text messages from their cell phones. Text "igotcha" to 274637. Include any information you have about a crime that's already been committed or that will be. Officials will act quickly without knowing who you are or what your cell phone number is. You'll get a message with an alias code from the system in Canada so local officials don't know anything about you.

**HAVE NO FEAR. STOP THE VIOLENCE.**

TEXT-A-TIP allows you to help the police department without getting involved. When you witness something wrong, send a tip, without bringing attention to yourself!

**SAVE A LIFE!**

**TEXT**

 **IGOTCHA**

to  
**274637 (CRIMES)**



Hopewell/Prince George  
Crime Solvers

[www.crimesolvers.info](http://www.crimesolvers.info)

Hopewell Police Department  
300 N Main Street  
Hopewell, Virginia 23860  
Tip Line: 804-541-2202  
Office: 804-541-2222

Prince George County Police Department  
6600 Courthouse Road  
Prince George, Virginia 23875  
Tip Line: 804-733-2777  
Office: 804-733-2773

**IT PAYS TO TEXT**

 **IGOTCHA**

**ABOUT A CRIME**

Hopewell/Prince George  
Crime Solvers

*Crime Does NOT Pay  
but Crime Solvers DOES*

**TEXT A TIP  
274637  
(CRIMES)**

**it's  
anonymous**

## TEXT-A-TIP Program

### How does it work?

Callers can text tip information via their cell or they can email tips. This is accomplished with complete anonymity. Virginia law protects the anonymity of tip providers. This information is exempt from a search warrant and subpoena. The system that disseminates this information to the agency is located in Canada. Canada law does not allow the release of "tipster" information. This gives an extra layer of protection.

### What are the advantages?

- No delay in receiving information
- Provides a two-way text dialogue between the sender and police through a secure connection.
- The Text-A-Tip program does not provide the police with your cell phone number.
- It's completely anonymous!

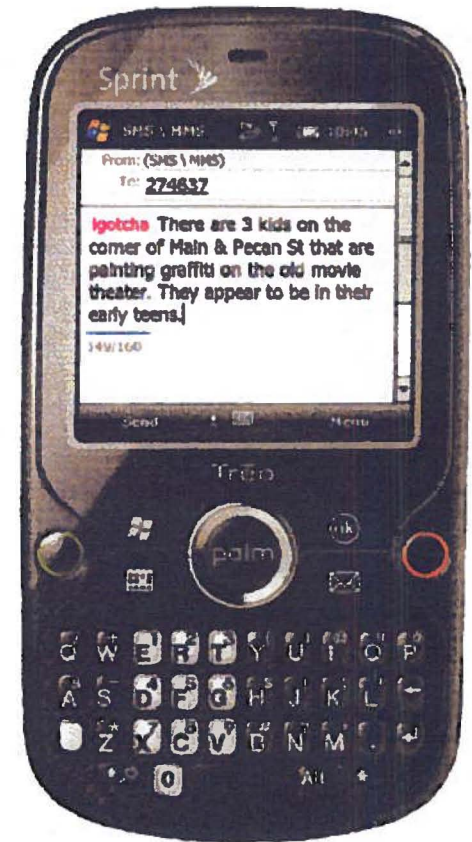


Hopewell/Prince George  
Crime Solvers

### Together We Can Make a Difference

#### SIMPLE STEPS to HELP Crime Solvers:

1. Add **274637** to your Contacts on your cell phone.
2. Know or see a crime? Text **igotcha** with your message.
3. Send it! Your cell phone # remains secure and anonymous.
4. Hopewell/PG Police Department receives your message anonymously.
5. You will have a 2-way anonymous text dialogue with Crime Solvers!
6. You will be provided an ID number that you will use when checking the status of your tip OR picking up your reward.



**BE READY**

**when a CRIME happens!**

**Add 274637 (CRIMES)**

**to your Contacts!**