

September 27, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- In an era of smartphones and social media accounts, nearly any person is able to say what is on his or her mind at any time. They can tweet or post status updates while they are out with friends, or when they are waiting in line at the grocery store. People are seemingly always connected, and always willing to share their experiences online.

Law enforcement officers in the Twin Cities have started using these social media websites when they are investigating certain crimes. It is especially useful to officers who are trying to learn more about gangs or [drug crimes](#) that are taking place in the cities. In Minneapolis, officers are watching social media websites 24 hours a day to assist in their investigations

Many people will post photos or tag their friends when talking about these illegal acts, which makes it very easy for officers to know who to arrest. Frequently, police officers will create fake identities and submit friend requests to individuals that they believe have committed crimes.

If these requests are accepted, the officers will be able to see other information that may have already been disclosed. Additionally, they may begin to ask their new "friend" about some of the things they may have heard about the crime. If the individual answers these questions, police may have all the information they need to make an arrest.

Individuals accused of a crime may wish to completely shut down their social media accounts. While it may not prevent investigators from learning about the details of the crime, it could slow the spread of information. At a very minimum, individuals should never discuss these incidents online, even if they are not guilty. This information could be misinterpreted by law enforcement, and could actually lead to a more intense investigation.

Officers may question you about posts that you have made that could potentially be connected to criminal activities. If you have been arrested, do not discuss this information with anyone, especially the police or prosecutors. Anything that you say or post on social media sites can be used later at trial. You do not want to disclose any of the evidence that could result in a conviction.

If you have been charged with a crime, be sure to speak to an experienced criminal defense attorney about your case. An attorney can explain the charges you are facing, as well as the potential penalties that may result. You will receive the answers to your questions, which will allow you to begin building a strategy that meets your needs.

Twin Cities police departments using social media to fight crime

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