A SHORT HISTORY OF CRIME PREVENTION

The concept of crime prevention goes back many years. Henry Fielding, who started his adult life as a writer, became a justice of the peace in England in 1748. Fielding had two goals, stamp out existing crime, and prevent outbreaks of crime in the future. He created the first neighborhood watch. His work with the English justice system led him to be called the “Father Of Crime Prevention.”

The first police department was the metropolitan police of London. It was formed in 1829 by Sir Robert Peel who continued the work of Fielding. Peel felt that the efficiency of the police should be judged by the absence or presence of crime. He also felt that the distribution of crime information is essential to public safety. The officers of the metro police were called “Peelers” and “Bobbies”, after their founder.

In the United States, the first crime prevention division was formed in Berkley, California on July 15, 1925. It was the first of its kind in police history.

It was originally formed as a crime prevention/juvenile unit. It was staffed with women that had social work backgrounds. The goal was to become involved at the beginning of behavior deviation to thwart anti-social behavior. The police became involved with behavior modification,

Things have changed over the years and the police and crime prevention now involves working with the community to try and lower the incidence of crime. Some of the ways this is accomplished:

- Educating the public as to what they should be looking for and what they should do.
- Encourage the use of alarms and video surveillance.
- Using improved locking devices.
- Increased lighting.
- Crime prevention through environmental design.

Crime prevention is the fundamental responsibility of the patrol force. It is the greatest crime deterrent organized society has.