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## A LOT TO 'LIKE:' LPD uses Facebook to keep residents updated

By DAN T. CHASE  
Editor

LONGMEADOW—As Captain John Stankiewicz of the Longmeadow Police Department pulled up the new Facebook profile for the force on his iPhone, he explained that the online forum is the best way to get up-to-the-minute current information on any event transpiring in town.

The site went live two weeks ago, and if you haven't already "liked" the page, it is highly recommended to do so. "The more people have timely, relevant information," Stankiewicz said, "the more apt they are to make good decisions."

The decision to embrace Facebook (and eventually YouTube and Twitter) was an easy one, he said; to offer residents the ability to access unfiltered, current events, and to also enlist the online audience in efforts to help solve and report on crime. "Facebook is an outstanding media tool," he added, "because from the Department's standpoint, we can control and moderate that raw information."

On their profile, the LPD can list the names, committed crimes, and mugshots

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## 'Longmeadow Cares'

Donations of fuel and firewood left at the Longmeadow Big Y on Williams Street. Anyone who wishes to make a donation can do so by contacting the store. (Photo by Amy S. Dane)

## Getting Better MPG for your Home: A new initiative offers homeowners valuable energy rebates

By DAN T. CHASE  
Editor

LONGMEADOW—Beacon Hill requires utility companies to help foster more energy-efficient techniques, and this past December, one of these programs turns up the heat for homeowners in Longmeadow.

It's called Home MPG, a program from the utility companies' consortium called Mass Save, with funds sourced from the U.S. Department of

Energy and the state Department of Environmental Resources. Locally, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has taken over as point people for the eight towns that can benefit—in addition to Longmeadow, Belchertown, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Monson, Palmer, Springfield, and Wilbraham.

Christina Petersen from the PVPC told *Longmeadow News* that the initiative covers dwellings from one to

four units. While the rebates and the incentives are rather valuable, it does require a homeowner to have the ability to invest in their home—not everything is no-cost.

But, she added, "As you get your energy bills this winter, that's when you're going to wonder what you can do differently."

Initially, the homeowner will schedule a no-cost energy audit with a home energy assessor, a two-hour,

thorough inspection from basement to attic. They look at the heating equipment and test it to see how well it's working, look at any appliances that you have, ask about your energy use, ask how many people are in the house, then check the attic for what kind of insulation exists. It is also possible, prior to this audit, to have a thermal-imaging photograph of your

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