



WeTip Membership  
Proposal For  
City of Lancaster,  
California  
March 2009

# CONCEPTS IN ACTION

The WETIP Anonymous Hotline (800) 78-CRIME working with  
The City of Lancaster, California in the fight against crime.

**THE NEED FOR A PROGRAM:** There exists for the City of Lancaster, California, an opportunity to further empower the citizens and businesses with a lawful, safe means to report crimes in the City. The areas to be targeted by the WeTip program would, be all crimes that may arise. The residents and business owners need a vehicle whereby they can safely report crimes, by making anonymous calls. This is accomplished by using the toll-free WeTip hotlines, reporting their information without fear of reprisal. Lancaster, California, needs good tips, leads and information from witnesses who have been thoroughly interviewed by professional operators. The WeTip Anonymous Informant Hotline, a proven and successful tip line can be economically provided and effectively implemented throughout the city, where residents have knowledge of persons committing crime, but are afraid to report what they know.

**PROPOSAL:** WeTip, Inc., a non profit, tax exempt 501(c)(3) corporation #95-277 5100 will make available, through a service provider agreement, the WeTip anonymous informant hotline (800)-78-CRIME for this project. All other WeTip anonymous hotlines will also be available for use in Lancaster, California, for all their anti-crime projects. (800) 47-ARSON, (800) 47 DRUGS, (800) US FRAUD, are all staffed by trained bi-lingual operators 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We project increased levels of arrests and convictions wherever the informant lines are promoted. Further, as a product of the implementation of this program, we anticipate greater awareness and participation of the citizenry, as they learn what to look for, to notice, and to report anonymously to WeTip. This will lead to savings of investigative hours by the Lancaster Station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

**BACKGROUND:** As the "grandfather" program of anonymous crime reporting hotlines, WeTip has a long history of providing law enforcement with an innovative solution to problems associated with witness protection and anonymity. WeTip Inc., was founded by Bill Brownell a retired Sheriff's Deputy of Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and Miriam Brownell, a business owner in the City of Ontario, California on February 15, 1972. WeTip has continually operated an efficient intelligence retrieval network with an nine member elected, volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of criminal justice executives representing prosecution, police, sheriffs, fire departments, business executives, school administrators, security organizations, and insurance companies. WeTip, Inc., also has a 21 member volunteer Board of Advisors to work on the best ways to serve members and provide safety for the people of the United States of America.

**PROVEN SUCCESS:** WeTip's toll-free 800 lines are staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by trained operators who are able to field calls in English, Spanish, and by machine for the hearing-impaired. Since its inception, WeTip has assisted law enforcement with these impressive statistics:

480,698 Tips

15,404 Arrests\*

7,964 Convictions\*

\$329,910,980 Drug Seizures\*

\$976,400 Rewards Paid

\*Statistics taken from dispositions received from law enforcement.

### **What do Investigators say about WeTip Information?**

- FBI Agent Tim White, (regarding bank robbery conviction #255216) "Suspect caught, due to WeTip lead, further investigation resulted in warrant indictment and guilty plea."
- El Monte Police Detective Dennis Miller reported "The two suspects had been running for 2 years, we had no Clue as to their location until this tip." The WeTip information led to the arrest and conviction of two men in San Bernardino. "Without the WeTip there would have been no capture."
- Detective Hart, LAPD (regarding attempted murder and 4 counts armed robbery at various ATM machines) "WeTip information led to suspect arrests for various crime at several ATMs. Total four victims."
- Detective Francine Clave a fraud detective with Ontario PD "This case was so comprehensive it involved two law enforcement agencies, Ontario PD and Santa Ana PD We had 77,000 victims, including a large insurance company." "WeTip Caller #375509 provided the information which led to the arrest and guilty plea."
- Richard Samms, ASCIP Senior Risk Manager "Crime losses had decreased by more than 90% saving the District almost \$1.3 million a year. For Compton this was phenomenal." referring to Compton Unified School District joining WeTip.
- FBI Agent R. Gibson (Regarding three bank robberies in Sacramento) "The FBI did not have much to go by until this WeTip came in. The tip led to the vehicle plate number, very helpful information."
- Detective Valencia, San Bernardino Sheriff's Phelan station describing a New Year's Eve Stabbing in Phelan in which the suspect was captured in Las Vegas, Nevada using WeTip information "The WeTip information was right on the money a 10+"
- Officer Don Hamblin, of the Wilson County, TN., Sheriff's Dept. related that "WeTip caller #412330 provided information that led to the capture of a Fugitive who had violated his parole and fled."
- Dr. Jim McBride, Wyoming State Superintendent of Public Instruction "This is an invaluable resource for making our schools much safer."
- FBI Agent Joe Auther (Regarding WeTip case #13333) "The informant's tip was instrumental in locating and arresting the suspect. Suspect is suspected in 17 robberies and confessed to 9."
- Detective Bancroft, LAPD, related in the murder of an 18 year old North Hollywood High School girl was shot in the head by Jamarie Chatrie who immediately left the scene of the crime. WeTip #343200 gave the exact location of the suspect. A search warrant was served where they arrested Chatrie. Found were 6 guns, narcotics and \$5,000 cash. Bancroft "rated the WeTip a 10+, excellent information."

**(1) WITNESS ASSURANCE OF COMPLETE ANONYMITY:** Never at any time do WeTip interviewers accept, identify or record the names of the witness providing information. WeTip operators answer all calls with: "This is WeTip. Please do not give your name. May I help you?" The operator then enters the resident's crime information into a secure computer system. Each individual case is assigned a computer-generated number. In cases where a reward is desired, a three-part code name is also assigned. From this point, the case number identifies all correspondence and communications with the witness and law enforcement authorities. Through this method, it is impossible for witness anonymity to be compromised. This method of intelligence retrieval encourages resident's participation because the provider of information is never at risk of being identified and/or fearful of criminal reprisal. WeTip operators will, if requested, give to key informants the name and phone number of specially selected intelligence agents in charge of investigations so they can be directly contacted.

**(2) TRAINED PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWERS:** Are able to retrieve information from witnesses (a) in their own language (i.e., English, Spanish, and by machine for the hearing-impaired) and (b) in terms that are most effective for law enforcement investigations. Operators are trained to ask specific questions relating to the crimes being reported. Through such sensitivity to witness and law enforcement needs, WeTip interviewers are able to provide law enforcement with valuable information regarding the individuals participating in criminal activities.

**(3) EASY ACCESS TO THE TOLL-FREE 800 HOTLINES:** Concerned citizens may dial the toll-free 800-78-CRIME, 800-US-FRAUD, 800-47-DRUGS or 800-47-ARSON hotlines from any telephone in the United States including Alaska, Hawaii, the Virgin Islands or Puerto Rico. Such easy access encourages participation and increases trust that the caller will not be identified.

**(4) A REWARD INCENTIVE:** Is available for individuals providing information leading to criminal convictions that encourages greater participation and quality leads. WeTip's experience in citizens witness cooperation demonstrates that some persons are more inclined to assist law enforcement authorities if they receive a financial incentive. While 50% of the persons participating decline to receive a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of criminals, the availability of this option yields greater public interest than would ordinarily occur without the reward incentive.

**(5) A REWARD DISTRIBUTION NETWORK:** Through which residents claiming rewards retain their anonymity and discretely receive their funds in cash through code name and number identification with Postmasters at U.S. Post Offices nationwide, or bank managers. In 1972, with the aid of Postmasters, a special reward drop system was created by WeTip to facilitate the transfer of reward funds to witnesses without compromising their anonymity. In cooperation with the Postmasters, individuals wishing to receive rewards for providing information that leads to the arrest and conviction of a criminal(s) identify a post office where they could pick up a reward. The WeTip informant has been provided with a three-part code name and computer generated case number for their respective tip. Whenever further contact is made with WeTip or law enforcement authorities by the witness, the case number is used as a reference point for identification. Whenever the information provided by an informant results in the conviction of a criminal and the informant desires a reward, the WeTip Board of Directors determines the amount of the reward, based on the investigator's recommendation. The local postmaster or bank manager then receives funds for distribution to the individual who bears the unique three-part code name and case identification number. No other personal identification is required. Consequently, the identity of the informant is never compromised.

**(6) TARGETED PROMOTION OF THE HOTLINE:** There is a direct relationship between the amount of promotion the WETIP hotline receives and the number of persons calling the informant line. Consequently, a multimedia campaign is necessary to raise community awareness of the availability of the hotline. Several forms of promotion and publicity have been used successfully to increase participation in the program: (a) public service announcement through television, radio, yellow pages and newspapers; (b) newspaper articles and features; (c) printed posters and brochures; (d) sturdy metal signs; (e) phone stickers; (f) bumper and window stickers; (g) newsletters and other printed media; (h) bill boards; (I) Incident Specific Flyers on any/all major crimes; and (J) training seminars, presented by WeTip, to familiarize law enforcement, city, fire service and school personnel with all WeTip services. In order to identify the most successful mediums for the hotline promotion, all persons who call the WeTip hotlines are asked to identify how they learned of the hotline.

**(7) LIAISON AND RAPPORT WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT:** The intelligence information provided through the WeTip hotline is provided in a format that can easily be assimilated into law enforcement investigations. When WeTip receives tips, they are entered electronically into an in-house, secure computer system. The tips are systematically rated according to a sliding scale of severity. Emergency and timely tips are immediately dispersed via telecommunications equipment to the proper law enforcement jurisdictions as indicated by sponsoring agencies. Tips may be phoned, faxed, e-mailed or a combination or the three. All cases are maintained for follow-up within the system. WeTip maintains regular liaison with departments and agencies responsible for investigating cases generated and supported by WeTip crime information leads.

**(8) A NETWORK OF EXPERIENCED INDIVIDUALS:** WeTip has served the nation for thirty-seven years, providing service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. WeTip was written up in the Congressional Record in 1973 and again in 1981. On September 23, 1988, in Washington, DC, the National Association of Chiefs of Police recognized WeTip by presenting to the WeTip Founders the J. Edgar Hoover Memorial Citation for their outstanding service to law enforcement and the general public. Since that time, an alliance has been forged to make available and promote the WeTip hotline as an empowering tool for community revitalization and reclamation. With the support of the nation's police chiefs, fire chiefs, and the breadth of experience on the WeTip volunteer Board of Directors, law enforcement is provided with a witness intelligence retrieval network that increases the level of arrests and convictions for criminal activities nationwide.

**PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION:** The hotline program as implemented by the City of Lancaster, CA., will assist in reducing and preventing the spread of crime. It will be comprised of the following elements: (1) day-to-day operational servicing by WeTip's anonymous hotlines; (2) targeted multimedia promotional activities and materials; (3) liaison with designated officials and law enforcement personnel; (4) program coordination, evaluation and progress reporting.

**ELEMENT I: Operations.** WeTip will provide the day-to-day operations and maintenance, multi-jurisdictional data sharing with all designated Lancaster Sheriff's Station Officers. WeTip will also provide standard promotional activities, reward funds, and statistical reporting of the WeTip hotlines.

**ELEMENT II: Promotions.** WeTip and The City of Lancaster will use developed hotline promotional materials for this project. These materials will include targeted multi-media promotions such as: (1) public service announcements for television and radio; (2) newspaper advertisements and articles; (3) billboard advertisements (when paid for or donated); (4) community signs and posters; (5) articles for newsletters; (6) resident fliers; (7) bumper and window stickers; (8) phone book advertisements; (9) phone stickers, and (10) Incident Specific Flyers to be used if your City is hit with a Major Crime the WeTip creative team will work with our members to produce Incident-specific flyers. Our office will work with you on the phone, e-mail or fax to design these flyers asking for information on the crime. We will use your pictures of the crime victim or scene or your composite pictures and your wording for the flyer. We will then e-mail or mail the finished flyer to you to print. (11) WeTip numbers may be used in news releases, press conferences, videos, manual, seminars and public communications (optional) for the program to effectively assist in fighting crime.

**ELEMENT III: Liaison.** Upon initiation of program based on any special instructions, WeTip will notify the designated representatives of Lancaster station of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and all designated law enforcement agencies concerning the special hotline program through written communications as directed by chosen representative of the Lancaster station of the Sheriff's Department. An ongoing communications effort will be made to facilitate greater cooperation between special authorities and local law enforcement. Further, as discussed and apportioned in Element I, WeTip, Inc., as directed by The City of Lancaster, CA, will cause anonymous crime leads from residents to be dispersed in a timely fashion to the designated recipient at each agency and law enforcement authorities through phone, e-mail, fax, and/or U.S. mail as directed by The City of Lancaster.

**ELEMENT IV: Program Coordination, Evaluation, and Reporting.** WeTip will coordinate the maintenance of the hotline contract and will cause to be maintained an accounting of specified tips received through the WeTip hotline. WeTip will provide these designated officials with an accounting of incidents reported on the tip line through a comprehensive year-end report.

**PROGRAM COST:** This program with the City of Lancaster, California would **include all** rewards, up to \$1,000, on all WeTip cases in the City of Lancaster (with the exclusion of extraordinary rewards) to be funded and paid by WeTip. That cost would cover all of Lancaster, California and all crimes against citizens of the City of Lancaster.

The cost for membership is only Six (6) cents per resident of the City of Lancaster, CA. Included in the membership will be 10% of the membership cost, back to The City and the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, Lancaster Station, in literature of your choice. Including brochures, posters, signs and stickers. We will also include several sets of newspaper slicks, at no charge for use in your local newspapers, city and police newsletters and magazines. Additional literature may be purchased at the member discounted price. Or upon request, we will e-mail original artwork, for all WeTip literature to the City of Lancaster, California's chosen personnel to be used for printing in any quantity, on their own.

**TERMINATION:** Membership in the PROGRAM may be terminated by The City of Lancaster upon written notice to WeTip. Such termination will become effective 30 days after the receipt of such notice by WeTip. Membership may be canceled by WeTip upon occurrence of any of the following conditions: The City of Lancaster, CA., produces PROGRAM material or implements or promotes the PROGRAM without approval by WeTip as prescribed in this agreement. Upon termination of membership, The City of Lancaster, CA., agrees to immediately discontinue use of any materials which contain the designated WeTip toll-free telephone numbers, and to remove, or cause to be removed, any poster, posting notice, sign, brochure, etc., in the possession or use of Lancaster, CA, which contain the designated WeTip toll-free numbers.

**RENEWAL:** Membership shall automatically renew on each annual anniversary date unless either party notifies the other party of its intent not to renew the membership. This notification shall be in writing and received by the other party at least 30 calendar days subsequent to anniversary date.



**LIABILITY and INDEMNIFICATION:** It is agreed and understood by The City of Lancaster, CA., that WeTip neither warrants, vouches for, nor authenticates the reliability of the information contained in the anonymous tips. Neither party shall be liable for any act or omission of the other party in the furnishing of that party's service.

WeTip hereby agrees to indemnify, defend and hold The City of Lancaster, CA., its employees, officers, directors, and agents harmless from and against any and all claims including substantiated costs and reasonable attorney's fees asserted against The City of Lancaster, by third parties based upon the negligence or willful misconduct of WeTip. The City of Lancaster, CA., hereby agrees to indemnify, defend and hold WeTip, its employees, officers, directors, and agents harmless from and against any and all claims including substantiated costs and reasonable attorney's fees asserted against WeTip by third parties based upon the negligence or willful misconduct of The City of Lancaster, CA,. and/or the LA County Sheriff's Department.

**Executed on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009, in Lancaster, California**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and title of officer of The City of Lancaster, California executing AGREEMENT)

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(Signature of officer of The City of Lancaster, California executing AGREEMENT)

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(Name and title of officer WeTip, Inc. executing AGREEMENT)

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Signature of officer of WETIP executing AGREEMENT)