

## **Mason County Courthouse to Begin Weapons Screening**

### **Local News**

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SHELTON, Wash. - Beginning next week, the Mason County Courthouse will be screening for weapons, Chief Sheriff's Deputy Dean Byrd tells us the new screening process involving metal detectors and an x-ray machine may add some delay to entering the courthouse, and visitors should plan accordingly.

The implementation of this program comes after years of discussion among Mason County's criminal justice officials and Mason County Commissioners. The additional security measures include metal detectors and an X-Ray machine installed in the main lobby Mason County Courthouse. The program is being administered by the Mason County Sheriff's Office. The new procedures will include a weapons screening station at the 4th Street entrance to the court house to screen people from bringing weapons and other restricted items into the building. Two officers will conduct the screening using state of the art equipment. The screening measures are similar to those used in airports around the nation. Access to the court house will be restricted to the one entrance. The new screening procedures will create some small delays in entering the court house especially at peak times. Visitors to the courthouse are advised to allow extra time for the screening process. They can help themselves considerably by leaving weapons and other questionable items at home or secured in their vehicle. Firearms and other weapons are prohibited from the court house by law. Other items which may be lawful to possess but nevertheless pose an unacceptable security risk for the court house are also prohibited. Some examples of other prohibited items include (1) sharp instruments such as knives, box cutters, utility knives, knitting needles (2) clubs, martial arts weapons, sling shots (3) tools such as hammers screwdrivers, chains (4) chemicals such as mace, pepper spray, tear gas, flammable liquids and (5) miscellaneous items such as skateboards, baseball bats, etc. Additional information on restricted and prohibited articles will be posted on the Mason County Sheriff's Office website at <http://so.co.mason.wa.us/index.php?id=134,0,0,1,0,0> . Questions regarding prohibited items can be directed to the Mason County Sheriff's Office at (360) 427-9670 Ext 313.