



*News From*

# Maggie Brooks

*Monroe County Executive*

**For Immediate Release**

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## **BROOKS LAUNCHES TEXT MESSAGING 'SAFETIP' SERVICE TO FIGHT CRIME**

***Service allows residents to text message crime tips anonymously***

**Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks** today announced that for the first time, mobile phone users throughout Monroe County now have the ability to provide crime tips through the power of anonymous text messaging. Monroe County and the City of Rochester have joined together with Monroe County Crime Stoppers to provide a new service that allows residents to send anonymous tips by sending a text message from any mobile phone.

*"The popularity of text messaging has created a significant opportunity for the public to help law enforcement agencies fight crime," said County Executive Brooks. "The ability for any citizen who owns a mobile phone to report wrongdoing with a simple text message will provide a major boost to local efforts to solve and prevent crimes. In addition, this is an absolutely safe and anonymous way to report crimes without fear of retribution. I am proud to partner with the City of Rochester and Crime Stoppers to launch this innovative crime-fighting effort."*

Use of the system is extremely user-friendly. Information may be anonymously received and securely replied to with complete confidence. The service was built specifically to allow text messaging informants to remain anonymous by encrypting the text messages and routing them through computer servers outside the United States. Contact information is cleansed in Canada and there is absolutely no information on who the tipster is or their phone number. The server assigns a tipster alias to maintain anonymous contact with the person who is texting a message.

In Monroe County and the City of Rochester, cell phone users will now be able to text message their crime tips by sending a text message to **C-R-I-M-E-S** or 2-7-4-6-3-7 as the recipient number. Before creating the message, users will need to type the word **S-A-F-E-T-I-P** and then type their tip message. Once the text is sent, the user will receive a message back to their cell phone notifying the user that the tip was received.

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**Brooks Launches Text Messaging “Safetip” Service to Fight Crime**

Monroe County Crime Stoppers is the lead agency in handling any tips that come in from cell phone users. Due to the caller’s anonymity, residents can feel confident in reporting information to law enforcement about any non-urgent illegal activity, such as unsolved cases, vandalism, theft, the sale and distribution of drugs or information about crimes that are being planned in the community or schools. For emergency calls, residents are still asked to call 9-1-1.

*“I am pleased that the County and City have partnered with Crime Stoppers to bring this vital tool to the community.”* said Monroe County Legislator Steve Tucciarello. *“This announcement highlights our community’s strong commitment to intermunicipal cooperation and shows how we can find innovative solutions that make our community safe.”*

The software that is being used for this program was developed by Anderson Software LLC and is branded under the name TipSoft. Monroe County is only the fifth user of this technology in New York State and the only County in Upstate New York to implement this program on a county-wide basis. Currently, agencies such as the New York Police Department, Los Angeles Police Department, Chicago Police Department, New Scotland Yard, and users across Canada have implemented this technology in their public safety efforts. Additional information on TipSoft Text Tips can be found on their website at <http://www.smscrimetips.com/>.

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