

UPDATE: New Twist: Man in Camouflage Near High School Found After Earlier 'Lock In' at School

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Update, 1:22 p.m.:

A man wearing camouflage when he was bow hunting near the high school has been found, Darien police announced, and they say he was hunting not on school grounds, but in the woods nearby, where he was authorized to do so.

The man was seen when he was returning to his vehicle in a parking lot at the Darien United Methodist Church, [345 Middlesex Road](#) after hunting, not to hunt in an unauthorized area, police said.

Here's the police news release, emailed at 1:13 p.m.:

On November 17, 2016 at approximately 8:30 am, the Darien Police Department received a report of

a white male dressed in full camouflage in the woods within close proximity to Darien High School.

Based on the report, the Darien High School and two nearby nursery schools were alerted and took precautionary measures until the Darien Police determined that there wasn't a danger. Officers remained in the area for the next several hours.

At approximately 12:30 pm, officers were able to identify the subject as a local hunter who was hunting in a nearby area he had authorization to be in. When he was observed this morning, the subject was simply returning to his vehicle which was parked in the parking lot of 345 Middlesex Rd.

The Darien Police Department would like to reinforce that there was never any threat to the safety of the Darien High School or nearby nursery schools. This incident remains under investigation.

Update 12:29 p.m.:

The "lock-in" at Darien High School was triggered after a caller to Darien police said at about 8:30 a.m. Thursday that a man in camouflage was on town-owned property — a wooded area between the high school and the Methodist church at the corner of High School Lane and Middlesex Road, a police spokesman said.

Police checked out the woods and the school grounds and found no one who fitted that description, although they did see signs of recent bow hunting in the woods. That's not permitted on that land only because the town hasn't approved it there, said the spokesman, Sgt. Jeremiah Marron.

The investigation into the incident is still active, Marron said.

Update, 12:16 p.m.:

When Darien police checked the woods around the high school Thursday morning after getting a report of a man in camouflage, they didn't find anyone, but they did see evidence of bow hunting, which isn't allowed in that area.

The sighting and report to police at 8:30 a.m., Thursday led to a "lock in" at the school, meaning students weren't allowed to go outside for a period of time.

Here's the entire text of the police announcement about the incident emailed at 12 noon:

On November 17, 2016 at approximately 8:30 am, the Darien Police Department received a report of a white male dressed in full camouflage in the woods within close proximity to Darien High School. The caller described the subject as being between 18 and 35 old, under 6 feet tall, and was wearing a backpack.

Numerous officers responded to the area and the administration of the Darien High School and two nearby nursery schools were notified. The schools took proper precautionary measures while officers searched the area.

During the investigation officers discovered evidence of recent bow hunting in nearby woods however bow hunting is not permitted in the area. Officers have remained on scene and in surrounding areas as this investigation continues. At the present time the Darien Police Department has no reason to believe there is any ongoing danger in the area and schools have resumed normal operations.

The police news release states at the bottom that it was issued at 11:30 a.m., but it was emailed a half hour later.

Original article, 12:02 p.m.:

A 25-minute "lock in" early Thursday morning at Darien High School resulted from a 8:45 a.m. report from someone who told authorities that an individual dressed in camouflage was in the woods near the school.

The school district informed parents about the incident in an email to those parents on a district email list. It did not announce the matter to the public, leaving the matter of informing the public to parents who then informed local news organizations.

Police went to the school and "indicated the building and grounds were safe" at about 9:10 a.m., according to an email from the school district to parents but was not otherwise announced by the school district.

DHS Principal Ellen Dunn said this morning that a "lock in" is a school safety procedure that differs from the more commonly known "lock down" in that students are free to go from room to room within the building but aren't allowed to go outside.

"A 'lock down' means students stay in the classroom with teachers," she said.

Here's the text of the email sent to parents this morning:

At approximately 8:45am this morning, it was reported to DHS administration that there was an individual dressed in camouflage in the woods surrounding DHS.

As a result, and as a precautionary measure, DHS went into "Lock-In" mode. The Darien Police arrived at DHS and investigated the report.

At approximately 9:10 a.m., the Darien Police indicated that the building and grounds are safe. The "Lock-In" has been lifted and a typical school day has resumed.

Darienite.com has left a message for Superintendent of Schools Dan Brenner, who has not yet responded.

Here's what we don't know (when each question is answered, we'll note it here):

- How did the "report" go to authorities? *A phone call.*
- What authority was contacted? *Darien police.*
- How close to the school was the individual in camouflage said to be? *In the woods between the high school and Darien United Methodist Church, which is on the corner of Middlesex Road and High School Lane.*
- The email does not state exactly when the "lock in" was put in place and when it was lifted. What were those times?
- This isn't the first time that an incident has occurred at the high school in which police were sent to the school and only parents on a district email list were notified, not the rest of the public. Why does the school district persist in doing this?