

How Neighborhood Watch Works

Neighborhood Watch is a Community Policing partnership program that rapidly expanded nation-wide in the 1970's to combat significant increases in residential crime. This program depends on citizen involvement to prevent and discourage crime and reduce fear by taking certain home, property, and personal self-protection precautions, really getting to know and look out for neighbors, and reporting crimes and suspicious activities to the police.

To be recognized as an active Neighborhood Watch community, our area must conduct three initial meetings. These meetings must consist of at least 50% of the neighborhood residence, and must be completed within a year. Thereafter, only one regular meeting is needed.

Why we need a neighborhood watch:

- A violent crime is committed every 16 seconds
- A residential burglary is committed every 9 seconds

Benefits:

- Beyond preventing crime and reducing fear, Neighborhood Watch forges bonds among block residents, improves citizen-police relations, and can address other block issues and concerns like child safety, youth development, senior citizen welfare, and quality-of-life.
- Direct telephone contacts to police agencies
- Learn how to handle city/county ordinances and nuisance violations

You are not being asked to take personal risks, only to serve as extra "eyes and ears" and to report information on crimes and suspicious activities to the proper authorities.

Steps for starting up Neighborhood Crime Watch:

1. Develop a planning committee to initiate the Watch program
2. Create a list of issues that need addressed within the community
3. Survey your neighborhood for persons interested in the Watch Program.
4. Agree on a method for communicating with the other residents
5. Maintain an organized agenda to keep things on track
6. Conduct meetings in a central meeting place
7. Establish the boundaries of the neighborhood watch area and locations
8. Maintain a roster of persons interested in participating in the program
9. Issue one of these rosters to each participating member
10. Complete a neighborhood sign-up roster
11. Set up regular monthly meetings
12. Set up a pyramid telephone system to notify the neighborhood of suspicious criminal activity, lost children, or a hazardous or threatening situation
13. Have Law Enforcement supply the facts about crime in our neighborhood
14. Conduct a neighborhood crime prevention class covering the items mentioned here; invite a police representative to discuss concerns and what police and residents can do together.
15. Educate neighborhood residents about the various state, city, and borough laws about problems (such as noise, harassment, etc.) and teach them what can be done, through individual or association action.