



# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

→ UNITING COMMUNITIES TO FIGHT CRIME AND CREATE SAFE PLACES TO LIVE, WORK & PLAY

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

[Neighborhood Watch](#) is one of the most effective and least costly ways to prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime. It fights the isolation that crime both creates and feeds upon. It helps build bonds among area residents, helps reduce burglaries and robberies, and improves the relationship between police and the citizens they serve.

## What is the value of Neighborhood Watch?

In today's transient society, communities are less personal. Many families have two working parents and children involved in many activities that keep them away from home. An empty house in a neighborhood where none of the neighbors know the residents is a prime target for burglary.

Neighborhood Watch is neighbors helping neighbors. Neighbors watch out for each other and the neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch helps build pride and serves as a springboard for efforts that address other community concerns such as recreation and community maintenance issues.

Throughout the country, dramatic decreases in burglary and related offenses are reported in communities which have active Neighborhood Watch programs.

## What is involved?

- Hold community meetings on a regular basis to share information and concerns.
- Form a citizens patrol that walks or drives through the neighborhood and alerts police to crime and questionable activities. Not all Watches need a citizens patrol.
- Communicate regularly, either through a newsletter or an electronic neighborhood bulletin board.
- Hold a special event, like a block party or holiday dinner, to help neighbors get to know each other.
- Host talks or program that focus on crime prevention or community maintenance issues.
- Work with neighbors and local government to organize a community clean-up. The cleaner your neighborhood, the less attractive it is to crime.

Watch members are not vigilantes. They act as extra eyes and ears for the police by reporting:

- Someone screaming or shouting for help.
- Someone looking into windows and parked cars.
- Unusual noises.
- Property being taken out of houses where no one is at home or the residents are out of town.
- Vehicles moving slowly with no apparent destination.
- Anyone being forced into a vehicle.
- A stranger sitting in a car or stopping to talk to a child.
- Abandoned vehicles.



## Reporting Crime

- Call 911 for emergencies or (804) 501-5000 for non-emergencies.
- Give your name and address. (You do not have to see the responding officer unless you want to. Your information will not be released to the public)
- Briefly describe the event: what happened, when it happened, where it happened and who was involved.
- Describe the suspect: sex and race, age, height and weight, hair color, clothing, and distinctive characteristic such as a beard, mustache, scars or an accent.
- Describe the vehicle if one was involved: color, make, model, year, license plate, and special features such as stickers.
- Provide a direction of travel if the subject has left the area.
- Do not hang up until the call taker says that it is alright to do so.

**Report all crime, no matter how minor or embarrassing, to the police. Help us help you!**

For additional information, call the Division's Prevention Services at (804) 501-4838 and ask to speak to someone about [Neighborhood Watch](#).

*(Information updated March 2026)*