

Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch, in various forms, has been around for many years. Today it is one of the most popular and successful of all efforts to prevent residential crime. Here in Virginia, it is reported that several hundred thousand households are participating in local Neighborhood Watch programs.

Perhaps one reason for the success of Neighborhood Watch is its simplicity. Although programs may vary the ways they are organized and the methods used to reduce the opportunity for crime, all are predicated on the need for residents to protect their neighborhood by observing and reporting suspicious or unusual activities.

Benefits

Many communities with active programs have experienced substantial decreases in burglary, vandalism and larceny. In addition to the prevention of residential crime, Neighborhood Watch

- Creates a greater awareness of crime;
- Increases reporting of crime and suspicious activities;
- Serves as a warning to criminals;
- Promotes neighborliness;
- Provides residents with access to crime patterns and trends that may threaten them; and
- Increases arrest and conviction of criminals due to the availability of eye witnesses.

Organizing

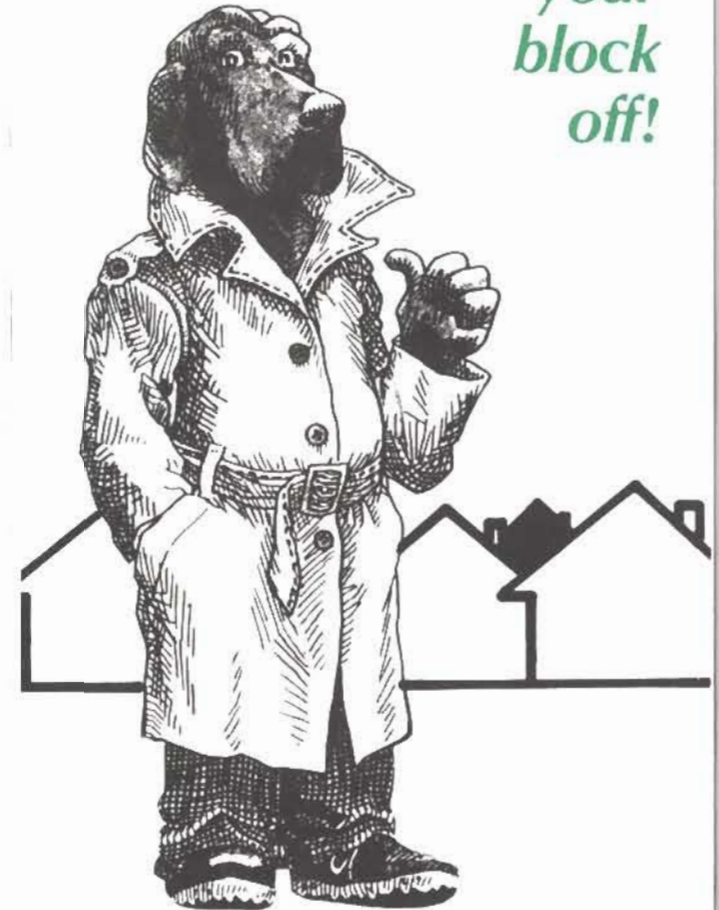
If your neighborhood does not have a program, talk with several neighbors about starting one. Arrange a meeting of the neighbors who have agreed to help, and call your local law enforcement agency for its participation and advice. This ad hoc committee can then assume the responsibility for initiating a watch program, including the identification of the watch area, selection of a program coordinator and block or road captains, and arranging for a meeting of all the residents to kick off the program.

Your home is better protected if

- All exterior doors are solid core doors with deadbolt locks
- Doors are always locked
- Locks are changed after moving into a new residence
- Your home address is visible
- Exterior doors are hinged from within
- There are good lights in areas which otherwise might conceal prowlers
- Shrubby close to your building is trimmed to prevent a break-in from going unnoticed
- There are wide angle viewers (peepholes) in solid doors
- Valuables are in a bank safety deposit box
- There are window stops to restrict opening
- Emergency numbers are close to all phones
- Milk and paper deliveries are always cancelled during vacations and absences
- Grass is mowed; snow is shoveled
- Light timers are used all the time, including periods of absences
- Garage door(s) is always closed and locked
- Vacation plans are never publicized or told to unknown persons
- You never leave a message on the door as to where you have gone
- All car doors are locked and keys are in possession of the owner
- Suspicious persons around your neighborhood are always reported
- License numbers of suspicious cars are always reported
- A trusted neighbor has access to your home during a vacation for periodic checks
- Identification is always requested of unfamiliar persons who ask to enter your home
- You avoid having personal identification on keys
- No information is provided to unknown callers—at the door and on the phone
- Your valuables are engraved with your driver's license number

This brochure provided by the Virginia Crime Prevention Association through a contract with the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

*Don't let 'em knock
your
block
off!*



**Join
Neighborhood
Watch**

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Do you know your neighbor's name, address and phone number?
Take a minute to find out.
You can help prevent crime and get to know your neighbors.

name
address
home phone
work phone

name
address
home phone
work phone

name
address
home phone
work phone

YOUR STREET

name
address
home phone
work phone

**YOUR
RESIDENCE**

name
address
home phone
work phone

name
address
home phone
work phone

name
address
home phone
work phone

name
address
home phone
work phone

YOUR STREET

Fill in the blanks and use this information to report suspicious activity to the police.

Police/Sheriff _____ Rescue _____

Fire _____ Doctor _____

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- A stranger entering your neighbor's house when it is unoccupied
- Anyone removing car accessories, license plates or gasoline
- Anyone peering into parked cars or houses
- Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle
- Anyone loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas or on the street
- Any vehicle moving slowly and without lights or one following an apparently aimless course
- Vehicles containing one or more persons parked at unusual hours
- Vehicles being loaded with valuables in front of unoccupied houses
- The sound of breaking glass or loud explosive noises
- Persons being forced into vehicles

Information most often needed by the police

- What happened?
- When?
- Where?
- Is anyone injured?
- Vehicle license number
- Vehicle description
- Direction of flight
- Description of persons including clothing