

Phase One: How to Get Started

1. Determine who will serve as the Chairperson. The Chairperson will lead and be responsible for the group activities and meetings. They will keep the group informed on concerns and what is going on in the neighborhood. The Chairperson will establish a preferred means of communicating with watch members—e.g., newsletter, telephone trees, e-mail, etc. The Chairperson will also keep in touch with the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator at the Police Department.
2. Determine who will serve as block captains. They serve as liaisons between the neighborhood and the chairperson and communicate information about meetings and crime incidents to all residents.
3. Determine neighborhood boundaries: North, South, East and West.
4. Call a Crime Prevention Officer with all of this information when it is determined.

Phase Two: Crime Prevention Unit Assistance

1. A criminal history is run on the chairperson and block captains selected. These positions will have access to sensitive information that requires this to be done. If the histories pass then we proceed on.
2. A three digit number is assigned to this newly established Neighborhood Watch after the above things are completed.
3. A first meeting is scheduled and a Crime Prevention Officer attends this first meeting. This first meeting is important as it gauges neighborhood interest and establishes the purpose of this watch. This meeting instructs attendees that a watch group is an association of neighbors who look out for each other's families and property, alert the police to any suspicious activities or crimes in progress, and work together to make their community a safer place to live.
4. Information is provided on purchasing individual signs for each yard as well as how to obtain free signs for that neighborhood.



Phase Three: Maintaining your new Neighborhood Watch

1. The Chairperson and block captains continue to meet regularly with citizens in the neighborhood to discuss issues and concerns. Help residents get to know each other and to collectively decide upon program strategies and activities. The Chairperson stays in touch with personnel from Crime Prevention.
2. Ensure that it is emphasized that Watch groups are not vigilantes and do not assume to role of the police. Ensure neighbors are alert, observant and caring and to report suspicious activity or crimes immediately to the police.
3. Gather the facts about crime in your neighborhood. The police department is the source of information relating to local crime patterns and statistics, home security, other crime prevention education, and crime reporting.
4. Physical conditions like abandoned cars, graffiti or overgrown vacant lots contribute to crime. Sponsor clean-ups, encourage residents to beautify the area, and ask them to turn on outdoor lights at night.
5. It is essential to celebrate the success of the effort and recognize volunteer's contributions through such events as block/neighborhood parties or cook-outs. Don't forget events like National Night Out that gives neighbors a chance to get together.

