

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH: CITIZENS AND POLICE WORKING TOGETHER

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH STANDARDS

- Step #1 --- Define neighborhood - usually between 8-20 homes
- Step #2 --- Locate a host home and set meeting date
- Step #3 --- Send out or hand deliver invitations
- Step #4 --- Hold meeting – explain program and its operation

THREE PART PROGRAM

1. Home Security
2. Operation I.D.
3. Neighborhood Watch

HOME SECURITY includes providing tips for better securing of homes. A survey of the interior and exterior of the home or business.

OPERATION I. D. is a burglary prevention program that encourages citizens to mark their property with their social security number. This effort, once completed, serves both as deterrent and property recovery and return assistance.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH includes the following:

- a. Identify a chairman and co-chairman for the group. These will serve a one year term.
- b. A location map of the neighborhood and a contact sheet of information which includes – names, addresses, home and work phone numbers, emergency contact numbers, color of car and plate number and any other information neighbors would like to share.
- c. House numbers clearly marked.
- d. Street names posted and intersections clearly marked.
- e. A communication system voted on by the group and implemented.
- f. Map, not contact sheet, on file with the police zone.
- g. Maintenance meeting held every 3 months to involve new neighbors, circulate engraving pen and discuss concerns.
- h. Posting of “ LETS STOP CRIME TOGETHER” signs.

In order for any group to receive their signs, they must have completed all of the above requirements. This includes involvement in all three parts of the program and filing map with your police zone.

NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME WATCH HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Crime Watch is based on a model developed in 1972 by the National Sheriff's Association. The National Neighborhood Crime Watch was developed in response to requests from Sheriffs and Police Chiefs for a program which would stem the dramatically increasing rate of burglary in the United States.

The program concept evolves from the experiences of localities across the country which have encouraged citizens to help Law Enforcement fight crime by being more observant of suspicious or criminal activity and then reporting that activity to appropriate authorities.

The Sheriff's Association recognized that changes in life styles were making neighborhoods less secure and more vulnerable to crime. Factors such as households where both husband and wife are employed, mobility and freedom provided by automobiles, the growing popularity of apartment living, and others, were causing many persons to become strangers to their neighbors. Many neighborhoods became deserted during the day and often, when people were at home, they were not aware or concerned enough to take action, if suspicious activity or a crime took place.

It has been estimated that over 15 million people in all fifty states as well as the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are participating in the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program.

ORGANIZATION OF ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME WATCH GROUP

A. Neighborhood Crime Watch Guidelines

1. Neighborhood Crime Watch Coordinator (Contact Person) and the Captains are the most crucial positions. They will provide the leadership and coordination and serve on the Neighborhood Crime Watch Committee, which has the following responsibilities.
 - a. To maintain and expand the program to include as many residents as possible.
 - b. To set forth objectives and strategies in cooperation with the Police that will make their neighborhood safer.
 - c. To plan and implement programs that will be beneficial and appropriate for the neighborhood.
 - d. To assess the success of the program and provide feedback to residents and the Police.

B. Guidelines For Neighborhood Crime Watch Coordinator

1. Serves as liaison between police and neighborhood.
2. Seeks resources and materials and makes them available to Captains.
3. Passes information from Captain to Police i.e. Suspicious vehicles, problems and concerns.
4. Maintain an up-to-date contact sheet of all members.
5. Passes information obtained from Police to Captains.
6. Arranges all Neighborhood Crime Watch meetings in conjunction with police.
7. Ensures compliance with guidelines to obtain signs from Virgin Islands Police Department's Police Community Relations/Crime Prevention Bureau, proclaiming that the neighborhood has a crime watch program.
8. Supervises the activities of the Captains.
9. Provides report to civic association, if one exists.
10. Establish subcommittees to develop specific crime prevention projects.
i.e. Operation I.D.

C. Guidelines for Captains

1. Serve as a liaison between residents and coordinators.
2. Recruit new crime watch members, striving for 100% participation in geographical location for which responsible.
3. Assist the coordinator in planning meetings and activities.
4. Maintain updated contact sheet.
5. Make maps of neighborhood, showing the names, addresses, crime watch number, telephone number of every participant's house or apartment.
6. Distribute map to each member, the Police and Emergency services such as Fire and Ambulance.
7. Notify residents of meetings and training sessions.
8. Designate work assignment as needed.

D. Guidelines for Neighborhood Crime Watch Participants

1. Get acquainted with your neighbors, know their names and be able to identify them and their vehicles by sight.
2. Keep your map and contact sheet in an accessible location.
3. Regularly attend neighborhood meetings. They are for your benefit.
4. Make your home as burglary resistant as possible.
5. Mark all your property for easy identification by using Operation Identification guidelines.

EVERY DAY

1. Be observant. Keep watch on neighbor's homes and report suspicious activities to police and neighbors.
2. Write down and report to the Police the license numbers and description of suspicious looking persons and vehicles in the neighborhood.
3. Educate your children in Crime Prevention and instill respect for the Police.
4. Do not try to make arrests. Being a good witness is more important. Get all necessary information and phone your police department.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTACT SHEET

(To be maintained and updated by coordinator)

FAMILY NAME _____

CHILDREN _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

WORK TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

MAN OF THE HOUSE _____ WOMAN OF THE HOUSE _____

OTHER _____

INDIVIDUAL TO CONTACT IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE NUMBER _____ WORK PHONE _____

FAMILY VEHICLE (s)

YEAR _____ MAKE _____ MODEL _____ COLOR _____

PLATE NUMBER _____

ANY SPECIAL FAMILY HEALTH / MEDICAL PROBLEMS?

ANY SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE / TRAINING SKILLS?

ANY OTHER PERTINENT / IMPORTANT INFORMATION?

SUSPECT DESCRIPTION

SEX _____ RACE _____ AGE _____

HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____ HAIR _____

TEETH (Missing?) _____ HAT _____

COLOR OF EYES _____ SHIRT _____

GLASSES _____ COAT OR JACKET _____

MOUSTACHE, BEARD, OR SIDE BURNS _____

COMPLEXION _____ PANTS AND SHOES _____

TATOOS, AMPUTATIONS, CARS AND / OR/ MARKS _____

SPEECH IMPEDIMENTS OR ACCENT _____

WEAPON _____

DISTINGUISHABLE WALK OR LIMP _____

JEWELRY: RING _____ BRACELETS _____

NECKLACE _____ EARRING _____

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION

MAKE _____ MODEL _____

YEAR _____ COLOR _____

BODY STYLE (2-door, convertible, etc.) _____

IDENTIFYING DENTS, SCRATCHES _____

LICENSE PLATE NUMBER (Look for T-, J-, or C-) _____

Wrong information is worse than NO information at all. Answer only these questions that you are sure of:

HOW MANY SUBJECTS WERE THERE? _____

WHAT DID THEY DO? _____

WHAT DID THEY SAY? _____

WHAT DID THEY TAKE? _____

WHICH WAY DID THEY GO? _____

WERE THERE ANY OTHER WITNESSES? _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

IS THERE ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU FEEL IS IMPORTANT TO TELL?
