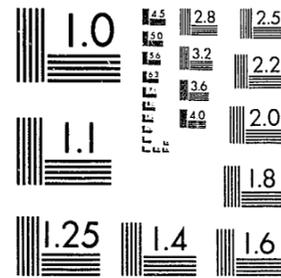


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# MODEL NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM GUIDE



We support the National  
Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign.

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been designed to assist citizens and law enforcement agencies in establishing Neighborhood Watch programs. The various points discussed are offered as suggestions on how a Neighborhood Watch program might be established. The extent of neighborhood problems and the commitment by neighborhood residents will determine which of the suggestions are adopted.

Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program which enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities. In past years, before we had super highways, two and three-car families, the popularization of apartment living, transience created by job transfers, etc., Neighborhood Watch was normally not needed because neighbors knew each other and naturally looked out for each other. Today in many communities neighbors are strangers to each other and consequently cannot watch out for one another.

Neighborhood Watch is thus an organized program to encourage neighbors to look out for each other. It involves the following primary activities:

- ° Neighbors getting to know each other and working in a program of mutual assistance.
- ° Citizens being trained to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhoods.
- ° Implementation of crime prevention programs, such as Home Security, Operation Identification, and others.

The following is a guide describing how to go about setting up a Neighborhood Watch program relying on program components generally recognized by most crime prevention professionals as basic elements of a Neighborhood Watch.

## I. Establish A Planning Committee

### A. Preliminary Meeting

1. Arrange a small informal meeting of several neighbors who are concerned about crime and are willing to assist in setting up the Watch program.
2. Discuss the need for a Watch program, the expected results, problem areas, and obtain definite commitments of the planning committee to continue service.

### B. Follow-Up Activity

1. Contact the local law enforcement agency to advise them of your plans and invite their participation.
2. If there is a civic association representing the neighborhood, ask the appropriate committee to study the development of a Neighborhood Watch program.

## II. Organize a Neighborhood Watch Meeting

### A. Contact the local law enforcement agency to brief them on program's progress and invite them to participate in the first formal neighborhood meeting.

1. Request a presentation on crime and what citizens can do to prevent it. Comments should serve to motivate persons in attendance and should include the benefits of a Neighborhood Watch program.
2. Obtain a commitment from law enforcement to work with the Watch program by agreeing to do the following:
  - a. Provide regular reports on crime in the neighborhood
  - b. Provide information on crime trends which may affect the neighborhood
  - c. When possible, provide the Watch group with handout and other resource material

## II. Organize a Neighborhood Watch Meeting - continued

- d. When possible, provide general crime awareness presentation to the Watch group
- e. Provide training to residents so they can assess their own security strengths and weaknesses and then take appropriate action

### B. Choose a Meeting Site

- 1. Neighborhood school
- 2. Church
- 3. Community center
- 4. Private residence

### C. Send out notices of date, time, location and purpose of meeting.

### D. Prepare a Meeting Agenda

- 1. Purpose and brief background
- 2. Have all in attendance introduce themselves
- 3. Introduce law enforcement officer (if available)
- 4. Discuss neighborhood crime problems
- 5. Explain benefits of the Neighborhood Watch program and how it is to be organized
- 6. Select a Neighborhood Watch coordinator
- 7. Select block or road captains (Can represent one block, several blocks, a road, etc., depending on geographical size and number of residents)

## III. Organization

### A. Neighborhood Watch Committee

- 1. The Neighborhood Watch coordinator and the block/road captains are the most crucial positions. These persons provide leadership and coordination and serve on the Neighborhood 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 law enforcement that will make the 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 law enforcement

### B. Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

- 1. Serves as liaison between the law enforcement agency and the neighborhood
- 2. Seeks resources and materials and makes available to block captains
- 3. Passes information obtained from law enforcement to block captains
- 4. Passes information from block captains to law enforcement; i.e., suspicious vehicles in neighborhood, problems and concerns
- 5. Maintains a master list of Watch members
- 6. Arranges neighborhood crime prevention programs in concert with law enforcement
- 7. Obtains signs proclaiming that the neighborhood has a Watch program

III. Organization - continued

8. Provides reports to the civic association if such exists
9. Supervises the activities of the block captains
10. Establishes subcommittees to develop specific crime prevention projects; i.e., Operation Identification, Block Mothers, etc.

C. Block/Road Captains

1. Serve as liaison between residents and coordinator
2. Recruit new Watch members, striving for 100% participation in the block or blocks for which responsible
3. Assist coordinator plan meetings and activities
4. Maintain list of participating members, including name, address, work and home phone number, vehicle type and license number
5. Distribute block map to each member containing information listed in No. 4 above
6. Notify residents of meetings and training sessions
7. Designate work assignments as needed:
  - a. Secretarial
  - b. Fund raising, i.e., sign purchase, Operation ID engravers, written material, etc.
  - c. Walking patrol
  - d. Vacation house checks
  - e. Others

III. Organization - continued

8. Contact at least quarterly each resident within block(s) and ask:

- a. Were you or a member of your family a victim of a crime in this neighborhood during the period? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
- b. If YES, what type of crime?
- c. Types of article stolen
- d. Total value
- e. Reported to law enforcement YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Did you call in a suspicious person or activity during the period? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

D. Activities and Tools

1. Patrols

- a. Can be accomplished by foot, bicycle or motor vehicle
- b. Citizen band radios or walkie-talkies can be used to speed transmission of suspicious activity reports
- c. Should only observe and report and take no direct action

2. Telephone tree

- a. Each individual in the Watch group is assigned to contact a specific number of other neighbors to pass on information
- b. Can pass on general information or vital information during suspicious circumstances or emergencies
- c. Each resident must provide his block/road captain with sufficient information about his household to make the system effective (see attached family data sheet)

### III. Organization - continued

3. Neighborhood Watch warning sign
  - a. Used to warn potential thieves, advise law enforcement, and assure residents
  - b. Large signs can be placed at entrances to neighborhood and throughout the neighborhood
  - c. Small signs can be placed on mailboxes or on homes
4. Neighborhood Watch window warning decal
  - a. Placed on doors and windows to warn potential thieves
  - b. Can also be used to identify motor vehicles belonging to particular neighborhoods
5. Neighborhood map (see attached sample guide)
  - a. Used as a guide to report information to law enforcement, fire, rescue or other emergency personnel
  - b. Informs residents who their neighbors are
6. Suspicious activity report (see attached sample)
  - a. Provides residents with a uniform guide to record needed information
  - b. Can be directly passed on to law enforcement personnel for use in investigations

### IV. Programs

The following list of programs can be undertaken by a Neighborhood Watch group.

#### A. Crime-Related Programs

1. Security Inspections (of homes and property)
2. Operation Identification

### IV. Programs - continued

3. Light the Neighborhood (porch or street lights)
4. Rape Prevention/Self Defense
5. Fraud Prevention
6. House Numbering
7. Child Safety and Security
8. Block Parents (Safe homes for children in need of assistance)
9. Drug Awareness

#### B. Other Interest Areas

1. First Aid/CPR
2. Baby Sitting Safety
3. Fire Safety
4. Traffic Safety
5. Phone Checks of Elderly or Handicapped

### V. External Resources

- A. The law enforcement agency is the primary resource for a Neighborhood Watch group. In many instances the level of involvement of the law enforcement agency will dictate program success.
- B. Many state and national groups have become interested in crime prevention.
  1. State Groups
    - a. Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
    - b. Virginia Department of State Police
    - c. Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
    - d. Virginia Tech Extension Service
    - e. Virginia Farm Bureau
    - f. Virginia Office on Aging
  2. National Groups
    - a. National Crime Prevention Coalition
    - b. American Association of Retired Persons
    - c. All U. S. military services

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
FAMILY DATA SHEET

(To be maintained by NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH Coordinator)

V. External Resources - continued

- d. Federal Bureau of Investigation
- e. U. S. Postal Service
- f. Insurance Information Institute

3. For more resources, contact your local law enforcement agency or the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

C. Other resources that might assist in preventing neighborhood crime include:

- 1. Mail carriers
- 2. Newspaper carriers
- 3. Fire prevention inspectors
- 4. Realtors
- 5. Utility personnel
- 6. Local government employees
- 7. Insurance salesmen

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Man of Household: \_\_\_\_\_ Woman of Household \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

Other residents: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Telephone Numbers:

Man of Household: \_\_\_\_\_ Woman of Household \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual to contact in an EMERGENCY:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Vehicles:

	Year/Make	Style	Color	License Number
No. 1	_____	_____	_____	_____
No. 2	_____	_____	_____	_____
No. 3	_____	_____	_____	_____

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: \_\_\_\_\_

MOUSTACHE, BEARD OR SIDEBURNS: \_\_\_\_\_ TIE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLEXION: \_\_\_\_\_ PANTS AND SHOES: \_\_\_\_\_

TATTOOS, AMPUTATIONS, SCARS AND MARKS: \_\_\_\_\_ WEAPON: \_\_\_\_\_

SPEECH IMPEDIMENTS OR ACCENTS: \_\_\_\_\_ (HANDGUN, RIFLE, KNIFE, ETC.)

DISTINGUISHABLE GAIT OR LIMP: \_\_\_\_\_ RINGS, BRACELETS, NECKLACES OR EARRINGS: \_\_\_\_\_

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION

WHAT MAKE: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

BODY STYLE (2-DOOR, CONVERTIBLE, ETC.): \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT COLOR: \_\_\_\_\_

IDENTIFYING DENTS, SCRATCHES: \_\_\_\_\_

LICENSE NUMBER/STATE OF ISSUE OR IDENTIFYING COLORS: \_\_\_\_\_

WRONG INFORMATION IS WORSE THAN NO INFORMATION AT ALL. ANSWER ONLY THOSE QUESTIONS THAT YOU ARE SURE OF.

1. HOW MANY SUBJECTS WERE THERE?
2. WHAT DID THEY DO?
3. WHAT DID THEY SAY?
4. WHAT DID THEY TAKE?
5. WHICH WAY DID THEY GO?
6. WERE THERE ANY OTHER WITNESSES? NAMES AND ADDRESSES.
7. IS THERE ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU FEEL IS IMPORTANT?

APPENDIX C

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
NEIGHBORHOOD DATA SHEET

NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE
NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE

STREET

NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	HOME	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE
NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE	NAME ADDRESS HOME PHONE BUS. PHONE

STREET

\_\_\_\_\_FIRE \_\_\_\_\_POLICE/SHERIFF \_\_\_\_\_RESCUE

**END**