



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

WHY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?

As part of the community, the Sheriff's Department plays an important role in keeping the community safe. However, there cannot be a deputy on every corner, so citizen involvement is essential to combat crime.

You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your community. By cooperating with each other and law enforcement, people can help fight crime in their community in the most effective way – before it begins.

Neighborhood Watch members place stickers in their windows and post Neighborhood Watch signs on streets, warning criminals that they are in an active Neighborhood Watch community, and that "neighbors are watching out for each other."

WHAT IS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?

An active Neighborhood Watch (NW) is one of the most successful and least costly crime prevention programs available. Neighborhood Watch is a cooperative effort between the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and its citizens. It is designed to help reduce residential burglaries and other crimes. You will learn how to:

- Identify and report suspicious activity
- Better safeguard your home and property
- Be prepared in case of emergencies
- And much more...

Some of the **free** services available to all citizens include:

- Residential Security Consultations
- Residential Vacation Checks
- Professional speaker(s) on a variety of topics
- Local crime statistics
- Crime prevention literature
- Neighborhood Watch window decals

By working with your neighbors and the Sheriff's Department, you can help fight crime in your neighborhood the most effective way...**before it begins!** Although the Sheriff's Department provides guidance in organizing and maintaining Neighborhood Watch groups, community volunteers, such as you, actually run the program. That way you can tailor the program to your own neighborhood's unique character.

HOW DO I START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH IN MY AREA?

- Step One: Talk to your neighbors and encourage them to participate in a NW program.
- Step Two: Plan your meeting; determine the best possible date, time, and location to hold your first meeting.
- Step Three: To schedule a NW meeting, call the Crime Prevention office **at least two weeks in advance.**
- Step Four: Publicize your meeting. Printed flyers/invitations are available.

HOW DO I KEEP OUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH ACTIVE?

It takes more than just one person to keep a Neighborhood Watch active and successful.

Once a Neighborhood Watch group is established in your area, members are encouraged to watch out for one another, target harden their homes, and **hold regular meetings or neighborhood events at least once or twice a year.** This way everyone can keep up-to-date on current crime trends and continue to build a sense of community.

Contact your local Crime Prevention Unit for ideas on keeping your Neighborhood Watch active.



Here are some commonly held beliefs, the reality behind those beliefs, and how Neighborhood Watch can help you and your neighbors...

“Crime’s not a problem in our neighborhood.”

This may or may not be true; however, because there is usually a lack of communication among neighbors most people don’t know what is actually occurring in their own community.

Neighborhood Watch encourages neighbors to talk to each other. At Neighborhood Watch meetings, a crime prevention specialist will provide group members with local crime statistics.

“If someone really wants to break in, they will.”

This probably true; however, most burglars will choose the easiest target, such as a house with an unlocked door or open window.

Neighborhood Watch group members will learn how to target harden their homes. The Sheriff’s Department offers **free** Residential Security Consultations to all citizens.

“What if I call the Sheriff’s Dept. and nothing’s wrong?”

So you may be a little embarrassed; however, what if your instincts were right? You could have prevented a burglary or something much more severe from occurring. **Neighborhood Watch** teaches group members how to identify and report suspicious persons, vehicles, activity, and crime.