

Neighborhood Watch is one of the oldest and most effective crime prevention programs in the country, bringing citizens together with law enforcement to deter crime and make communities safer.

Sponsored by the [National Sheriffs' Association](#) (NSA), Neighborhood Watch can trace its roots back to the days of colonial settlements, when night watchmen patrolled the streets. The modern version of Neighborhood Watch was developed in response to requests from sheriffs and police chiefs who were looking for a crime prevention program that would involve citizens and address an increasing number of burglaries.

Launched in 1972, Neighborhood Watch counts on citizens to organize themselves and work with law enforcement to keep a trained eye and ear on their communities, while demonstrating their presence at all times of day and night. (The program took off quickly: in just ten years, NSA data showed that 12 percent of the population was involved in a Neighborhood Watch.) Neighborhood Watch works because it reduces opportunities for crime to occur; it doesn't rely on altering or changing the criminal's behavior or motivation.



What is it?

- It is an effective and low cost means of preventing crime
- It fights the isolation that crime both creates and feeds upon
- It forges bonds among area residents
- Improves relations between police and the communities they serve.

Goals

- Establish Neighborhood Watch Groups in every neighborhood in Woods Cross.
- Provide training, support and networking for Neighborhood Watch groups
- Notify neighborhoods of crime patterns that develop in their area.

The Growing Need for Neighborhood Watch

It is a fact of life that relationships in many of today's communities' have become less personal than they were years ago. Families are more transient, children have more activities that take them and their parents away from home, and there are more families with both parents working. The once familiar sight of families visiting with each other on front porches while keeping a watchful eye on children and activities in the neighborhood is a rarity in most communities today. This trend away from personal contact in the neighborhood and the decrease in time families spend at home are two of the essential ingredients that make communities ripe for crimes of opportunity, such as burglary.

Tips

- Work with the Woods Cross police or Davis County sheriff's office.
These agencies are critical to a Watch group's credibility and are the source of necessary information and training.
- Link up with your victims' services office to get your members trained in helping victims of crime.
- Hold regular meetings to help residents get to know each other and to decide upon program strategies and activities.
- Consider linking with an existing organization, such as a citizens' association, community development office, tenants' association, or housing authority. They may be able to provide an existing infrastructure you can use.
- Canvass door-to-door to recruit members.
- Ask people who seldom leave their homes to be "window watchers," looking out for children and reporting any unusual activities in the neighborhood.
- Translate crime and drug prevention materials into Spanish or other languages needed by non-English speakers in your community. If necessary, have a translator at meetings.
- Sponsor a crime and drug prevention fair at a church hall, temple, shopping mall, or community center.
- Gather the facts about crime in your neighborhood. Check police reports, conduct victimization surveys, and learn residents' perceptions about crimes. Often, residents' opinions are not supported by facts, and accurate information can reduce the fear of crime.

- Physical conditions like abandoned cars or overgrown vacant lots contribute to crime. Sponsor cleanups, encourage residents to beautify the area, and ask them to turn on outdoor lights at night.
- Work with small businesses to repair rundown storefronts, clean up littered streets, and create jobs for young people.
- Start a block parent program to help children cope with emergencies while walking to and from school or playing in the area.
- Emphasize that Watch groups are not vigilantes and should not assume the role of the police. Their duty is to ask neighbors to be alert, observant, and caring—and to report suspicious activity or crimes immediately to the police.

Home Security Checklist

- All doors are locked at night and every time you leave the house
- Exterior doors are solid wood or metal clad with reinforced glass
- Entryway doors have wide angle peepholes and deadbolts
- Spare keys are kept with trusted neighbors, not under a mat or in the mailbox
- Garage doors are always closed
- Door leading from the garage to the house is always locked
- Windows are always locked
- Shrubs and bushes are always trimmed, not allowing a place to hide
- No dark areas around the house, garage or yard at night
- Every outside door has a working, bright light to illuminate visitors
- Your home inventory is up-to-date and includes pictures. A complete copy is kept somewhere out of the house.

9-1-1 KNOW WHEN TO CALL

Before dialing 9-1-1, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this an emergency?
- Is it occurring right now?
- Is life, or property at risk?
- Is immediate response necessary?

If the answer is **YES** to these questions, then it is a good idea to dial 9-1-1 immediately.

However, if the answer is **NO**, you may call the non-emergency number, 801-292-4422

When you do call for help, please be prepared to answer questions that you may not find relevant to the situation. Remember dispatchers are trained to know what information is important for responding personnel to know.

Contact

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[City of Woods Cross](#)