



# PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

JULY/AUGUST 2012

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH—  
FIGHTING CRIME IN THE  
COMMUNITY 1

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH— SOME  
FACTS ABOUT CRIME 2

CRIME MAPPING—  
BEING AWARE OF WHAT IS GOING  
ON AROUND YOU 2

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH—  
TIPS AND TECHNIQUES 3

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH— WHAT IT  
IS NOT 3

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH— AN  
ACTION CHECKLIST 4

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH—FIGHTING CRIME IN THE COMMUNITY

This year local police agencies, including the Sheriff's Office, have been emphasizing the need to prevent burglaries due to an increase in burglaries since the fall of 2011. The agencies have been encouraging citizens to take steps to prevent burglaries and encouraging them to call 911 whenever they see any suspicious activity.

Neighborhoods who organize themselves as Neighborhood Watches are successful in preventing crime. This is true especially with property crimes such as burglaries or car prowls. A Neighborhood Watch is a key component to preventing you and your neighbors from experiencing crime.

Neighborhood Watches work by:

- Improving communications between neighbors and between the neighborhood and deputies.
- Educating the neighborhood about crime threats and crime prevention.

- Increasing surveillance to catch or deter criminals.

Neighborhoods that have had the most success in reducing crime have been the ones that are the most persistent. In some cases a little effort goes a long way and the crime problem seems easy to fix. In other cases, the crime problem seems to stick around no matter what you do.

By setting goals, keeping the communications going, and being open to innovative ideas, Neighborhood Watch should be able to reduce crime in your neighborhood.

When citizens share responsibility in preventing crime with the Sheriff's Office, crime goes down much faster than if the public relies solely on police to do the work. The Sheriff's Office cannot reduce or prevent crime on its own. It needs the help of citizens, taking practical steps to protect their property and call 911 when they see crime in progress or suspicious activity.



John Lovick, Sheriff  
Snohomish County  
Sheriff's Office

3000 Rockefeller  
M/S 606  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-388-3393  
<http://sheriff.snoco.org>

**CRIME MAP-  
PING- BEING  
AWARE OF  
WHAT IS GOING  
ON AROUND  
YOU**

An important part of a Neighborhood Watch is ensuring that everyone knows what is going on around them.

A new tool that has been growing over the last few years is crime mapping. Local police agencies contract with a national web site (there are several) to provide information to the public about specific crimes in their communities.

The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office uses [www.crimemapping.com](http://www.crimemapping.com) to provide this information to the public.

Enter your address and you can see an up-to-date report of crimes in your area. You can even have the site send you alerts to your email address.

Try it out. Know what is going on by going to:

[http://  
sheriff.snoco.org/  
Our\\_Community/  
CrimeMapping.htm](http://sheriff.snoco.org/Our_Community/CrimeMapping.htm)

**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH- SOME FACTS ABOUT CRIME**

Most crime that affects neighborhoods includes:

- Theft- taking property from others without permission.
- Robbery- using threats or force to steal from an individual.
- Burglary- breaking into a home or business to steal or commit another crime. Burglary is often confused with robbery. A burglary occurs when no person is present, robbery occurs when people are present.
- Vehicle prowls- breaking into a vehicle to steal or do damage (whether the vehicle is locked or not).

Sixty-six percent of burglaries are residential. Most residential burglaries occur during the day when no one is likely to be home, from 9am to 3pm. Business burglaries occur at night, when businesses are closed.

A car is stolen every 11 minutes in Washington state.

Car prowls happen at night, when people are asleep, to vehicles parked on the street or in driveways.

Criminals do not want to get caught,

so they try to do their crimes when and where no one will see them.

Despite what you might see in the media, most crime does not harm people physically. Homicide, assault, rape, and robbery are a relatively small percentage compared to burglaries, theft, car theft and car prowls. While police departments expend a great deal of resources to solve homicides and assaults, you are more likely to become a victim of property crime.

Police often explain the reason for crime with a Crime Triangle. For a crime to occur, a criminal needs Desire, Ability and Opportunity. Needing money for a drug habit can create a desire to steal. Criminals with experi-

ence and who are not incarcerated have the ability to commit crime. Unlocked house doors or windows provide the criminal with the opportunity to commit a crime.



Remove any side of the triangle and you do not have a crime. Government and social service organizations might be able to take away the desire and ability but citizens can remove the opportunity. Taking away the opportunity is the control that you have over your own security.

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH- TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

**Some Tips for Success.** Each neighborhood and each situation will be different. But following are some general tips for a successful Neighborhood Watch:

- When starting your Neighborhood Watch, talk to your neighbors in person. This will give you good idea of how involved your neighbors want to be.
- Hold regular meetings and communicate regularly with the members.
- Consider linking with another organization such as your homeowner’s association.
- The Neighborhood Watch does not have to work on crime only. Often the local crime problem goes away, but there may be other neighborhood issues that you and your neighbors can work on that you all think are important.
- Have fun. Focusing only on crime can get you depressed. Enjoy working toward a goal. Enjoy working with your neighbors.
- Each member of the Neighborhood Watch should keep a personal log. Write down the date, time and description of suspicious activity or crime that each member has observed.
- Take advantage of 21st century communications by connecting your neighborhood Watch members through email or even social networking.

**Some Prevention Techniques.** Crime prevention professionals have developed a concept called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to help people

change their surroundings to enhance prevention and reduce crime. It centers on:

- **Natural Access Control** manages entry to defined areas. Controls may be fences, gates, or landscaping. It sends the message that there is only one access point and that guests must seek permission to enter. Even simple low-level hedges or rows of bushes can effectively control and keep people out.
- **Natural Surveillance** gives the ability to see into and out of areas. Crooks don’t want to be seen committing crimes. Keep shrubs and bushes trimmed below ground level windows and trees pruned above eye level. Use outside lighting at night to enhance illumination in dark areas.
- **Territoriality** gives the perception people get when they enter your space. Perception is an powerful crime prevention tool. Overgrown landscaping and peeling paint give the impression of apathy and indifference. Keep your home in good repair so criminals sense your ownership and your exclusive right to your property.

For more information about CPTED go to:

<http://sheriff.snoco.org/Documents/CPTED.pdf>

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH- WHAT IT IS NOT

*Sometimes mention of organizing a Neighborhood Watch makes people think that they have more to do, need lots of training, and maybe put themselves in danger.*

*Neighborhood Watch members do not have to walk patrols in dark places, confront crooks, or learn how to use a gun.*

*A neighborhood can have an active Neighborhood Watch if everyone keeps alert on what is going on around them as they go about their daily business.*

*You do not have to be intimate with your neighbors. You just have to know who they are so that you can distinguish what is suspicious activity in your neighborhood. For example, knowing the cars that belong in your neighborhood helps you determine if a strange car is present and maybe you should be more wary.*

*A Neighborhood Watch is not about being paranoid, it is about taking simple, practical measures to protect yourself and your proper-*

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH- AN ACTION CHECKLIST

You have secured your home and property. You are now in the habit of locking your car and securing valuables out of sight of passersby.

But criminals will come into your neighborhood. They will try to steal from you and your neighbors.

Your observation and initiative can help to discourage criminals from coming back to your neighborhood.

People often ask “What is suspicious activity?” The answer is anything that may seem out of the ordinary in your neighborhood. Being aware of patterns such as when kids come home, when parents come and go, knowing what your neighbors drive, etc. helps you determine what is suspicious. Some examples of suspicious activity can include:

- Persons loitering around the neighborhood
- Screams or suspicious sounds
- Sounds of breaking glass or shattering wood
- Anyone removing valuables from home or vehicles
- Strange vehicles parked at your neighbor’s home

- Persons going door to door
- Beam from flashlight or light in neighbor’s home
- Vehicles cruising the alleys or neighborhood
- Anyone being forced into a home or car
- Abandoned vehicles

When you see suspicious activity write down the make, model, color and license number of any associated vehicles. Also write down the description of any suspects.

Call 911. Answer the questions of the call taker. Stay on the phone until the call taker is finished asking questions.

After calling 911, call your Neighborhood Watch Captain or other Neighborhood Watch members to make them aware of the situation.

Never assume that others will call. Even if they do, that is more information that 911 and deputies can use to determine what to do.

### CRIME PREVENTION COORDINATOR

**ANN GIFFORD,**  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS  
[neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org)

425-388-7375

### SHERIFF’S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

[http://sheriff.snoco.org/Sheriff\\_Services/Crime\\_Prevention.htm](http://sheriff.snoco.org/Sheriff_Services/Crime_Prevention.htm)

### NEWSLETTER INFO

#### EDITOR

Steve Moller

If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at [neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org)

#### “PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION NEWSLETTER” ARCHIVES:

[http://sheriff.snoco.org/Sheriff\\_Services/CrimePrevention/CommunityPolicingNewsletter.htm](http://sheriff.snoco.org/Sheriff_Services/CrimePrevention/CommunityPolicingNewsletter.htm)

### TIP LINES



Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office: 425-388-3845

<http://www.snoco.org/app/ssh/anonymoustips/>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477