

Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch is a volunteer citizen program of mutual assistance among neighbors aimed at reducing crime in the neighborhood at the grass roots level. It involves neighbors getting to know neighbors, being alert to the potential of crime, and being willing to look out for each other's interest. Neighborhood Watch is designed to ultimately involve thousands of residents throughout Lee County because strong neighborhood involvement and neighborhood unity can deter crime. The only requirements for Neighborhood Watch are as follows:

- Participants must be alert, and willing to keep an eye on their neighborhood.
- Willingness to report suspicious activity to law enforcement.
- Willingness to learn how they can make their homes more secure.
- Watch groups must meet at least once a year, or more often as needed.

Neighborhood Watch involves a cooperative effort between the citizens of Lee County and law enforcement. Crime can occur any time and anywhere; Neighborhood Watch must be in effect 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Crime hurts everyone. Areas that have an active Neighborhood Watch Program have reported dramatic reductions in crime.

Why Neighborhood Watch?

It works by a reduction of the burglary threat. If your home has been burglarized, Neighborhood Watch can help you recover your peace of mind. By banding together with your neighbors, it can also make your community safer and stronger by forming partnerships to address community concerns.

How To Organize A Neighborhood Watch

When a citizen or group decides to form a Neighborhood Watch:

- Contact the Lee County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit at 477-1400 for training in the Watch Program and home security.
- Select a Neighborhood Watch Chairperson and Block Captains who are responsible for organizing meetings and relaying information to members.
- Recruit members, keeping up-to-date on new residents and making special efforts to involve everyone in the community.
- Schedule a meeting of their leaders and the community with the Sheriff's Office. At this meeting the Watch Program is explained and the duties and responsibilities of the chairperson and block captains are reviewed.
- Put up Neighborhood Watch signs and continue to work with the Lee County Sheriff's Office by hosting regular meetings.

Neighborhood Watch Components

- What is Suspicious Activity?
- How to Report Suspicious Activity
- Telephone Chain
- Operation Identification
- Home Security Surveys
- Leadership of the Watch
- 9-1-1

What Is Suspicious Activity

- Someone running from a car or home.
- Someone screaming. If you can't determine what the screams are for, call the Sheriff's Office.
- Someone going door-to-door in the neighborhood or looking into windows and parked cars.
- A person who seems to have no purpose wandering in the neighborhood
- An unusual or suspicious noise that you can't explain, such as breaking glass or pounding.
- Vehicles moving slowly, without lights or with no apparent destination.
- Property being removed from a closed business, or residence.

- A stranger in a car stopping to beckon to a child.
- A child resisting the advances of an adult.
- Business transactions conducted from a vehicle or merchandise offered at a ridiculously low price.
- A stranger entering a neighbor's house when unoccupied.
- Anyone loitering in a parked car.
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates or gasoline from a car.
- A stranger carrying appliances, luggage, or other bundles from a neighbor's home.



How To Report

Law enforcement officers need to have accurate information as quickly as possible about a suspicious activity or crime in progress.

- Give your name, address and telephone number.
- Describe the event in as brief a manner as possible. Who, What, Where, When, and How?
- Tell if the crime is in progress or past occurred.
- Describe the suspect, if known. What sex, race, age, height, weight, hair color, clothing, accent, beard or mustache, and distinctive characteristics or clothing
- Describe the vehicle if one was involved, include color, make, model, year, license plate, special markings, dents and which way did it go.

Telephone Chain

Neighborhood Watch will set up a telephone chain to enable neighbors to keep one another informed of any criminal activity and to receive information pertinent to their Neighborhood Watch.

Operation Identification

Neighborhood Watch has members mark their valuables with their Driver's License Number.

Home Security Surveys

Neighborhood Watch members will review how well their home is secured.

Leadership of the Neighborhood Watch

Each Watch needs a Chairperson (Coordinator) and Block Captains. Responsibilities for these positions are varied, but not overwhelming. A list of responsibilities will be provided.

9-1-1

Enhanced 9-1-1 is a computer enhanced emergency telephone number. It displays the address and telephone number of the caller.

Call 9-1-1 to report:

- Fire or smoke
- Car, plane, train, or boat accidents
- Commission of a crime in progress
- A person in need of emergency medical treatment
- Severe weather conditions
- Impaired / reckless drivers

Neighborhood Watch Checklist

- ✓ Do you feel safe in your neighborhood?
- ✓ Do you know who your neighbors are?
- ✓ Do you watch out for neighbor's homes when they are not home?

- ✓ Do you tell your neighbors when you are leaving for an extended period of time?
- ✓ Does your neighborhood have an active Neighborhood Watch Program?
- ✓ Have you conducted a Home Security Survey?

- ✓ Do you know what suspicious activity is?
- ✓ Are you comfortable calling the Lee County Sheriff's Office?
- ✓ Do you know how to report suspicious activity or crime in progress?
- ✓ Do you know when to call 9-1-1?



For More Information Contact the Lee County Sheriff's Office Community Relations Unit at 477-1400. The Lee County Sheriff's Office has Crime Prevention Specialists that are available to answer questions relating to this brochure or other safety concerns and are available to conduct a wide variety of educational programs free of charge.

Crime Prevention	477-1400
Public Gun Range	690-3999
Fraud Line	477-1242
Crime Stoppers	1-800-780-TIPS

It is the policy of the Lee County Sheriff's Office to protect the Constitutional rights of all people, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical handicap, religion or other belief system or physical characteristic; and to treat each person with respect and dignity.

"Proud To Serve"
Sheriff Mike Scott

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



Sheriff Mike Scott

14750 Six Mile Cypress Parkway
Fort Myers, Florida 33912

EMERGENCY 9-1-1
Non-Emergency 477-1000
Web-site: www.sheriffleefl.org

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