

How to Start a Neighborhood Watch Program in Anchorage

The Anchorage Police Department Neighborhood Watch Program is designed to be community driven and thrives on neighbors watching out for neighbors.

It is designed to help:

- Reduce Crime in the community
- Encourage Neighbors to be alert to potential crime and take appropriate actions
- Combat crime before it starts by reducing the opportunities for crime to occur.

Neighborhood Watch is an organized group of citizens devoted to the reduction and prevention of crime in their neighborhoods. Few people are in a position to protect their homes and property at all times. Vacations, business and shopping trips, or an evening out will leave your home vulnerable. The Neighborhood Watch Program is neighbors watching out for neighbors. Your neighbors know who you are, when you are likely to be in or out, what type of car you own, and may be the first to notice a burglar at your window or door. An Anchorage Police Officer patrolling your community wouldn't recognize a stranger in your yard – but your neighbor would.

For Neighborhood Watch to be totally effective, each resident should take an active role in both security improvement and observation.

Neighborhood Watch participants learn:

- How to make their homes less inviting as a target for thieves at no cost by having a home inspection to make their homes more secure.
- How to participate in Operation Identification, making their personal property more difficult for burglars to dispose of.
- How to be more aware of suspicious behaviors and how to take appropriate action.
- How to report the incident to the Anchorage Police Department.

Step 1

Contact your neighbors and see what the expressed level of interest is. We have brochures that we can email or mail you to help introduce and explain the program. You may contact Officer Natasha Welch at 786-8585 or ncw@muni.org to request materials. Find out what night of the week would work best for the majority of your group.

Step 2

Decide on the boundaries of your Neighborhood Watch. Will it be a city block, a condo association or half of a long street? Group size should be kept within manageable limits. A useful rule of thumb is when it comes down to making phone calls, or ringing doorbells, no one should be responsible for more than 20 homes. All participants should be able to clearly see each others homes. Keep the group small and manageable.

Step 3

Call the Neighborhood Watch office at 786-8585 and schedule an Introduction Presentation with the staff. We are available Tuesday through Friday from 2pm until 12am. A 7pm start time has historically worked well for most working families. The presentation is about an hour long and may be longer with questions. The staff will provide your group with a crime map detailing the past years worth of reported crime in your groups area.

Step 4

Hold the Presentation. Choose a meeting place that is handy to your area. A presentation held in the home of a participant usually draws the best turnout versus one that is held at a location participants have to drive to.

Suggested Meeting Checklist:

1. Find a meeting place that is free, conveniently located and of a suitable size.
2. Establish a time and date convenient for residents and the Neighborhood Watch staff.
3. Promote the meeting by invitations, email and word of mouth to all neighbors in your area. The meeting should be promoted as an opportunity for problem solving through dialogue with neighbors and Neighborhood Watch staff.
4. Set up the meeting place to encourage interaction by all participants. Set up reception tables so that attendees may be able to sign up for the new Neighborhood Watch.

Once at least 50% of the designated area has participated in the presentation, you will qualify for window clings and decals provided by the program staff. A sign will be posted in your area as decided by the Municipal Traffic office with coordination from the Key Person or organizer.