



**COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION
NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK WATCH
HANDBOOK**

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COMMUNITY BLOCK WATCH PROGRAM

Anyone can be a victim of a burglary, vandalism or other crimes. Despite our best effort, we sometimes feel alone and vulnerable to crime. There is a viable protection tool available. Something residents in the community can do by banding together with their local law enforcement agencies to prevent crime before it happens. It's not a crystal ball. It is a Community Block Watch Program. It can be called Block Watch, Crime Watch, or Neighborhood Watch. Whatever the title, it's one of the most effective and least costly methods of crime prevention and reduces the fear of crime.

The Block Watch unites law enforcement, local organizations, and individuals in a community wide effort to reduce residential crime. Currently, the King County Sheriff's Office is unable to dedicate a deputy to coordinate this program. In an effort to continue this valuable program, the King County Sheriff's Office has produced this block watch informational packet so that citizens can continue to work within their neighborhoods and from their own Block Watches, to help reduce crime and the fear of crime.

To have a Block Watch, you do not have to be a victim of a residential burglary, assault, or robbery. Crimes like vandalism, damage to property, excessive noise, and traffic violations can be reduced through the Block Watch Program. In addition, developing disaster plans, neighborhood functions, and general safety programs are also part of the Block Watch Program.

Thousands of Block Watch Programs have been established all over the country. Any resident can take part: young, old, single, married, renter, homeowner. Block Watch is a very successful anti-crime effort. It breaks down the isolation of neighbors as they work together with each other to build a plan on how to deal with issues in their own neighborhoods. When something happens, neighbors will be informed, and when the deputy responds, a contact will be created with the Sheriff's Office.

Block Watch members are NOT vigilantes. They are the extra eyes and ears for reporting crimes and helping their neighbors. Members learn how to make their homes more secure, watch out for each other's homes and neighborhood. They report activities that raise their suspicions to the Sheriff's Office.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A BLOCK WATCH MEETING

1. **Contact your neighbors:** As many as you like, but don't overcrowd your home. About 10 to 15 homes in an optimum size! Remember, those neighbors who are interested, but can't attend the meeting because of prior commitments, may still be part of the Block Watch Program as long as someone in the group can pass along the information.
2. **Advise your neighbors of the meeting date:** Use the attached invitation to distribute information. The meeting host will usually have coffee, doughnuts, etc, for the guest. Meetings generally last 1 to 2 hours and will consist of three parts.
 - Home Security
 - Expectations of the neighborhood
 - Requirements for neighborhood signs
3. If possible, before the meeting, make up a Neighborhood Map of the area encompassing your neighborhood (see example), and complete a phone tree or email list. On the map, add names, addresses and telephone numbers of each household. Make enough copies to allow distribution to all of the neighbors who wish to become involved.

NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

<p>Jim & Jane Smith 206/555-1234</p>	XXXX	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Street Address
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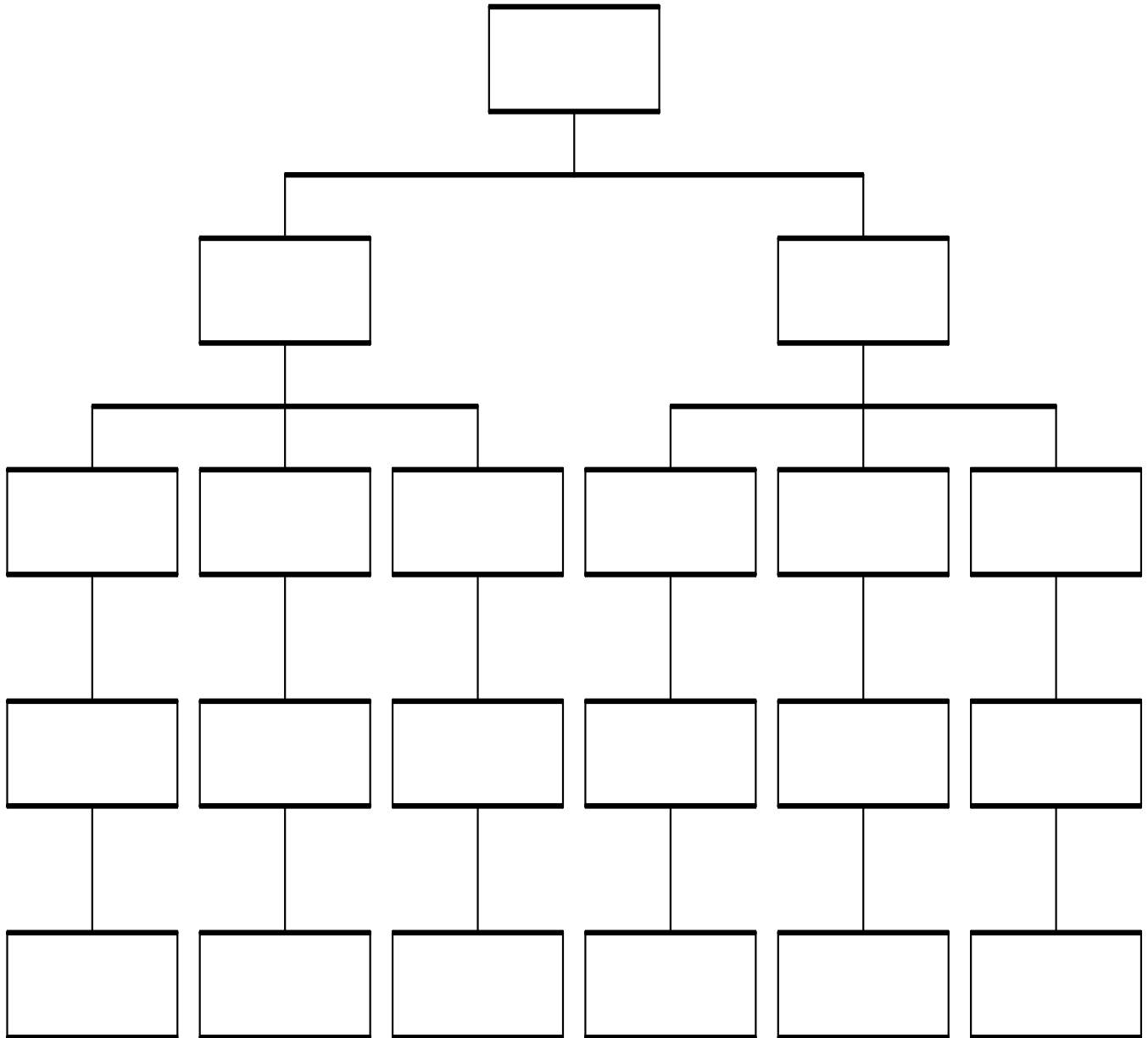
____ Street Address ____

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have everyone put his or her name, phone number, and house locator number in the appropriate place on the map.
2. Copy the map so that each member of the Block Watch program will have a copy.
3. People/homes that did not express an interest in the Block Watch should not be provided with a copy of this document for obvious reasons.

PHONE TREE



HOW TO USE: If you see or hear anything suspicious:

1. Turn on all outside lights
2. Call 911 immediately
3. Call the Block Watch Captain
4. Call your contact(s) on the phone tree

It is understood that if you cannot reach your neighborhood contact, you should call that person's contact to continue to relay the message to all residents on the block.

BLOCK WATCH MEETING

Dear Resident,

Your neighbor, _____, phone number _____, is setting up a Block Watch Program in your neighborhood. *You are cordially invited to attend* and become part of this effective neighborhood Crime Prevention Program.

MEETING DATE: _____ MEETING TIME: _____

MEETING LOCATION: _____

Please contact your neighbor and let them know if you will attend.

REMEMBER, CRIME PREVENTION STARTS WITH YOU!

BLOCK WATCH CAPTAIN

The role of the Block Watch Captain is frequently misunderstood. The Block Watch Captain is not the person who is responsible for keeping crime off the block. Being alert to crime and trying to prevent it is **EVERYONE'S** responsibility! Nor does the Block Watch Captain have to patrol the area, or be responsible for everyone's house keys, or watch their homes during vacation.

The primary function of the Block Watch Captain is to act as a communication link between the Block Watch members. The responsibilities of the Block Watch Captain include:

1. Receiving newsletters and distributing them to the Block Watch members.
2. Receiving and distributing to Block Watch members any special materials such as crime alerts, should they ever be needed.
3. Contacting new neighbors who move onto the block to see if they are interested in joining the Block Watch, and provide information for them from previous meetings.
4. Make sure the Neighborhood Map and Phone Tree are updated with current names and phone numbers when necessary.
5. Encouraging block residents to communicate with each other. It is not solely the responsibility of the Block Watch Captain to "spread the word" about crimes that happen on the block, suspicious activities, or other block problems or needs. He/She does need to encourage residents to call others on the block when something needs to be communicated. (To avoid being the only person who is relied upon for communication, the Block Watch Captain may wish to set up a "phone tree" to speed up the block communication without putting a heavy burden on any individual.
6. We suggest the Block Watch groups meet formally at least once a year to renew acquaintances, review Block Watch problems and possible solutions and if needed, to select a new Block Watch Captain.

Serving as a Block Watch Captain isn't time consuming, and you do not have to be home all the time in order to volunteer. Although the Captain is responsible for making sure the above activities are performed for the block, the Captain does not personally have to perform them all. Others on the block can be asked to assist with any or all of them.

The Block Watch Captain's role is essential to creating and maintaining an effective Block Watch. And since an independent study found an active Block Watch could help reduce the likelihood of burglary by up to 60%, the Block Watch Captain performs a vital service to the neighborhood and community.

BLOCK WATCH MEETING ATTENDANCE FORM

DATE: _____

DEVELOPMENT: _____ CITY: _____ ZIP: _____

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
	<u>PHONE/EMAIL</u>	
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____

TOTAL HOUSES ON BLOCK: _____

BLOCK WATCH CAPTAIN: _____

ALTERNATE NUMBER IF CAPTAIN
NOT AVAILABLE: _____

PROPER INSTALLATION OF BLOCK WATCH SIGNS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PROCEDURES:

A) Block Watch Captain will deliver map of neighborhood to:

Dave Paul, Neighborhood Traffic Safety Engineer
Department of Transportation
Road Services Division
M.S. KSR-TR-0222
201 S. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98014-3856
(206) 263-6125
EMAIL: dave.paul@metrokc.gov

B) The map will detail where they would like the signs placed and the direction the signs should face. Use the following symbols to indicate sign placement on the map. Back of sign ">". Front of sign "<". Vehicle direction of travel "←". *Place signs only at entrances to neighborhoods.*

C) The Block Watch Captains name, address and phone number will also be on the map for contact.

D) When the map is delivered, Dave Paul will investigate the locations of placement. He will then determine where the signs can be placed and how many a neighborhood can have.

E) If the Traffic Safety Engineers' decision is not accepted, no signs will be approved for placement.

F) When all sign locations are approved and accepted by the Department of Transportation, the Block Watch Captain is responsible for the following:

1. Procurement, payment and receipt of the Block Watch signs from Correctional Industries (see page 13 for contact information);

2. Delivery of the signs to:

King County Roads Maintenance and Operations Section
155 Monroe Ave N.E., Building B (Sign Shop)
M.S. RSD-TR-0100
Renton, WA 98056-4199

***Block Watch Captain's name must be on the outside of the**

package.

- G) The signs will be placed at locations in the neighborhood when the work orders are received from the Engineer. *Read Do's and Don'ts on following page.*
- H) To order signs from Correctional Facilities, fill out and send the attached letter of intent to accompany your order.

BLOCK WATCH (B/W) SIGN INSTALLATION DO'S AND DON'TS FOR BLOCK WATCH CAPTAIN

- Do show the directions in which the block watch sign is to face on the map that you submit.
- D.O.T (Department of Transportation) can install the B/W sign(s) below street name signs.
- D.O.T can strap the sign(s) to concrete, wood, street light poles, etc.
- D.O.T. will *not* install B/W sign(s) to the back of stop signs, speed limit signs, and warning signs (for opposite direction of travel) nor above or below these signs (for same direction of travel)
- D.O.T. will *not* install B/W sign(s) on power poles
- D.O.T. may deny other installations in addition to those above.
- B/W sign(s) will not be installed on private property, such as outside of the right-of-way or on private fences. They must go in the public right-of-way.
- The Captain should attempt to establish a perimeter for the neighborhood; do not try to put the B/W sign in front of the Captain's house or the home of another favored resident or neighborhood leader. This may show neighborhood favoritism, and it is ineffective from a crime prevention standpoint.
- Some neighborhoods want signs almost on every street. This will not be done due to the concept of **sign pollution**. Too many signs detract from the overall effectiveness. Remember, establish a perimeter; do not attempt to sprinkle them around within the neighborhood.
- **Do not send any maps for sign installation to the sign shop in Renton!** The sign shop does not determine where sign(s) will be placed, and it is done via work orders to the sign shop.
- D.O.T. will *not* maintain the B/W sign(s). For example, if they are vandalized, stolen, or fade out over time, it is up to the neighborhood to obtain new acceptable signs. Follow this procedure for having the new sign(s) reinstalled.
- D.O.T. maintains control of all signs within the county right-of-way. Any unauthorized signs are subject to immediate removal without notice. No attempt will be made to locate the original installer/owner of the illegally installed sign for purposes of returning the sign to him/her/them. These signs will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about these procedures, please call the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP), coordinating engineer Dave Paul at 206-263-6125.

Correctional Industries
PO Box 41116
Olympia, WA. 98504-1116
Phone: (360)753-9661, Fax: (360)664-9329
Customer Service: 1-800-628-4738

LETTER OF INTENT: Purchase of Block Watch Signs Only

Date: _____

Please print

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Shipping Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax

Number: _____

I _____ am responsible for payments of products ordered from Correctional Industries, within 30 days from receipt of invoice.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES OR REFERENCES

1. King County Sheriff's Office web site:
 - www.metrokc.gov/sheriffClick on "Crime Prevention"
Click on "Prevention Handbook" and "Community Activities"
2. Nation Crime Prevention Council:
 - www.ncpc.org
 - www.weprevent.org
3. National Association of Town Watch/National Night Out
 - www.nationaltownwatch.org
4. Puget Sound Energy Street Lighting Program
 - www.intolight.com

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

Abandoned Vehicle Hotline.....	(206)205-0969
Animal Control Complaints/Enforcement	(206)296-PETS
Burn Ban Information.....	1-800-595-4341
DDES Code Enforcement (Land use violations).....	(206)296-6680
King County Code Enforcement	(206)296-6616
King County Department of Transportation	1-800-KCRoads
Metro King County Council Receptionist	(206)296-1000
King County Sheriff Non-Emergency Dispatch	(206)296-3311
Office of Citizen's Complaints/Ombudsman.....	(206)296-3452
Speed Trailer for Neighborhood Use: Kyle Shira	(206)296-8153
Traffic Complaints	(206)296-3311

911 QUESTIONS (what a call receiver may ask you)

Lost or Missing Children

Following is a list of questions for missing or lost children as an example. No matter the reason for the call, many of the questions will be similar. Most importantly, the amount of information given to the 911 operator greatly enhances the ability of the Patrol Officer to act on the callers concern.

- 1) How long has the child been missing?
- 2) Where was the child last seen?
- 3) Child's Name?
- 4) Age & date of birth?
- 5) Physical description of the child including:
 - Height, Weight
 - Hair color and style
 - Eye color
 - Complexion (fair, medium or dark)
- 6) Clothing child is wearing (hat, shirt, jacket, pants, shoes).
- 7) Other descriptor features: visible marks or scars, jewelry, glasses, etc.
- 8) Does the child have any serious medical problems, and are they on any medications?
- 9) Has the house been thoroughly searched to make sure the child is not there? (May have been hiding)
- 10) Are there any nearby areas that the child may be heading to or may be at?
- 11) Is anyone currently looking for the child now?
- 12) Any custodial issues involved?
- 13) Is there a current picture of the child available?

TIPS

1. Remain calm and answer all questions asked by the 911 operator. By being on the phone with 911 you are ****NOT**** delaying help or the officer's response time.
2. While officers are en route they will be looking for the child first.
3. It's important that someone stay at the residence at all times in case the child returns home.
4. After calling 911, start calling nearby friends and family to advise the child is missing and to check to make sure the child is not there.
5. If the child is found or has returned prior to the officer's arrival, make sure 911 is advised.

HOME SECURITY ASSESSMENT

ENTRANCES

1. Are the doors metal or solid wood construction? Y N
2. Are door hinges protected from removal from outside? Y N
3. Are there windows in the door or within 40” of the lock? Y N
4. Are there auxiliary locks on the doors? Y N
5. Are there strikes and strike plates fastened securely: Y N
6. If there are no windows in the door, is there a wide angle viewer or voice intercom device?
..... Y N
7. Can the lock mechanism be reached through a mail slot, delivery port, or pet entrance at
the doorway? Y N
8. Is there a screen or storm door with an adequate lock? Y N
9. Are all exterior entrances adequately lighted? Y N
10. Can entrances be observed from the street or public areas? Y N
11. Does the porch or landscaping offer concealment from the street? Y N
12. If door is sliding glass door, is sliding panel secured from being lifted out of the tracks? ..Y
N
13. Is a “Charlie bar” or other adequate locks used to secure slider? Y N
14. Is sliding door mounted on the inside of the stationary panel? Y N

ENTRANCES FROM GARAGE AND BASEMENT

15. Are all entrances to living quarters from garage and/or basement of metal or solid wood
construction? Y N
16. Do doors from garage to living quarters have locks for exterior entrances? Y N
17. Do doors from basement to living quarters have locks from living quarter side? Y N

GROUND FLOOR WINDOWS

18. Do all windows have adequate locks or a method of pinning in addition to a regular lock? Y

N

19. Do all windows have screens or storm windows that lock? Y N
20. Are exterior areas of windows free from concealing structures or landscape? Y N

UPPER FLOOR WINDOWS

21. Do any upper floor windows open onto a porch or roof? Y N
22. Are they secured as if they were at ground level? Y N
23. Are trees and shrubbery trimmed away to prevent access to upper levels? Y N
24. Are ladders kept outside house where accessible? Y N
25. Are tools (hammers, shovels, etc) left outside? Y N

BASEMENT DOORS AND WINDOWS

26. Is door from outside to the basement adequately secured? Y N
27. Is it adequately lighted? Y N
28. Is it concealed from view from street or neighbors? Y N
29. Are all windows secured against entry? Y N

GARAGE DOORS AND WINDOWS

30. Is overhead door secured with locking device? Y N
31. Is garage door kept closed and locked at all times? Y N
32. Are windows adequately secured? Y N
33. If there is a walk-in door, is it adequately secured? Y N
34. Are all garage doors lighted on the outside? Y N

VALUABLE PROPERTY

35. Do you have valuables properly marked with driver's license number? Y N
36. Do you have current/complete inventory records of valuables? Y N