



Westminster Police Department – 9110 Yates Street, Westminster, CO 80031

Westminster Police Department Neighborhood Watch Program

Organizing and Maintaining a Successful Neighborhood Watch Program

Westminster Police Department
Investigator Kate Kazell
Public Information Officer

Phone: (303)658-4422
Email: kkazell@cityofwestminster.us
Web: www.ci.westminster.co.us

A Message from Westminster Police Chief Tim Carlson



Congratulations on your plan to organize a Neighborhood Watch Program in your neighborhood. I know the program will be beneficial to you and your neighbors, and I commend you for taking the initiative to become involved in your community by starting what can be one of the most successful programs in the nation – Neighborhood Watch

The Neighborhood Watch Program creates a positive climate where you organize your own action groups and work with us to maintain peace and order in your neighborhood. To be effective, we must work together as a team.

We will do everything we can to assist you in developing your Neighborhood Watch Program, but I must emphasize that the program is yours, and it can only be as successful as the amount of commitment that you and your neighbors place upon it. Again, if we are to combat the problems of crime and violence in our society, we must work together. We need your assistance in acting as our eyes and ears. Despite the old adage that says there's never a cop around when you need one, our feeling is that the best way to involve the police in your neighborhood is to be observant, and when problems arise, to call us for assistance.

Thank you for your cooperation, and I look forward to the success that this cooperative will create.

Sincerely,
Tim Carlson
Chief of Police

Important Phone Numbers

Police Department

Emergency.....	911
Dispatch (Non-Emergency).....	(303)658-4360
Barking Dog Hotline.....	(303)658-4326
Code Enforcement.....	(303)658-4432
Graffiti Hotline.....	(303)658-4444
Investigations.....	(303)658-4222
Records.....	(303)658-4380
Traffic Complaint Hotline.....	(303)658-4335

City Hall

Main Line.....	(303)658-2400
City Clerk.....	(303)658-2162
Passports.....	(303)658-2337
City's Manager's Office.....	(303)658-2006
Community Development.....	(303)658-2114
Fire Department.....	(303)658-4500
Municipal Court.....	(303)658-2240
Parks, Recreation & Libraries.....	(303)658-2192
Public Works & Utilities.....	(303)658-2175
Streets Division.....	(303)658-2501
Utilities Division.....	(303)658-2500
Standley Lake Park Rangers.....	(303)425-1097
Water Billing.....	(303)658-2030
Westminster City Web Site.....	www.cityofwestminster.us

What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a national program implemented across the United States, involving neighborhoods working cooperatively with the Police Department to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Although it is known by different names, "Block Watch," "Crime Watch," and "Town Watch," Neighborhood watch is virtually the same in all 50 states.

The concept originated in 1963 in Monterrey Park, California, a small community of about 11,000 people. The program was developed to combat a rising burglary problem. In 1962, Monterrey Park experienced over 3,000 burglaries in their city of only 11,000 people. Citizens of this community felt compelled to implement a community-based program to combat the problem.

During the next several years the community was divided into two separate groups; a group of approximately 5,000 citizens participated in the pilot Neighborhood Watch Program, while the remaining section of the city did not. Over the next 3 years, a significant reduction in burglaries was noted, particularly in 1-year where the Neighborhood Watch section of the community only experienced 25 burglaries and the remainder of the city experienced nearly 1,000 burglaries.

The key to success of Neighborhood Watch is that it must be a community "grassroots" activity. In the City of Westminster we have experienced moderate decreases in crime in specific areas, but only in those areas where the neighborhood leaders took charge of the program and constructed a Neighborhood Watch program to assist the Police, not to become dependent upon them. Taking ownership over the problems of crime in your area is far more important than just involving the Police Department in its routine patrols. Neighbors that actively organize and work together to create a much higher quality of life significantly reduce crime in their neighborhoods.

If you think Neighborhood Watch might work in your area, this booklet will lead you through the process of organizing a Neighborhood Watch Program. It is not a small task. However, if you work cooperatively with your neighbors and delegate tasks to the entire group, it can actually be a fun and worthwhile endeavor. We are not advocating spying on your neighbors but watching your neighbors' homes and property and helping prevent crime in your neighborhood.

The only requirements placed upon Neighborhood Watch groups are that they register with the Police Department, hold at least two meetings a year, participate in National Night Out, and maintain an 80% participation rate in Operation Identification (*which will be explained later*).

For those groups that meet these requirements, Neighborhood Watch signs will be erected by the City of Westminster. Costs of obtaining and maintaining the signs will be done by the City of Westminster. You simply need to determine with the assistance of the Police Department where you want the signs to be installed and notify us if the signs get damaged or need replaced.

Conducting a Needs Assessment

Prior to arranging for a Neighborhood Watch meeting, it is highly recommended that you conduct a needs assessment of concerns and crime issues in the neighborhood. A sample questionnaire is included in the back of this packet. The needs assessment could be as simple as walking through your neighborhood, going door to door, and talking with your neighbors about their concerns with crime, and especially their desire to participate in Neighborhood Watch.

While conducting the assessment, it is important to explain to your neighbors that you're interested in organizing a Neighborhood Watch program but you can't do it by yourself and you'll need their assistance and involvement.

The size of the area that you choose for your Neighborhood Watch program is left to your discretion. However, the Police Department's experience is the program will not succeed with a small number of homes, usually ten or less. It is recommended that you pick a group of homes, between 20 and 30, to organize your Neighborhood Watch Program.

In traditional neighborhoods, it was recommended to invite all the homes around a specific block, but most neighborhoods in Westminster aren't traditional blocks. You may also wish to choose a row of homes or homes in an adjacent cul-de-sac. Basically you are looking for homes that look upon one another. It is also beneficial to encourage the homes on the block across your back fence to be involved in Neighborhood Watch as well.

Once you've conducted a needs assessment, whether in writing or verbally, you should go back and address the same issues with your neighbors and let them know what the general consensus of the neighborhood was, i.e. most people felt a concern about crime in their neighborhood or have noticed problems with vandalism or burglary, etc., and felt that there was a need for a Neighborhood Watch program.

Also, obtain and complete a Block Map of those neighbors who wish to participate in your Neighborhood Watch program. Details reference obtaining and completing the Block Map are listed later in this packet.

Explain what the Neighborhood Watch program involves and that you will be contacting them in the near future to invite everyone to a Neighborhood Watch organizational meeting in your home or at a local church, school or community center.



Organizing Your Neighborhood Watch Meeting

Organizing a Neighborhood Watch meeting is no different than organizing any other kind of meeting in your place of business or at home. Once you have conducted your needs assessment and have determined there is a concern about crime in your neighborhood, as well as an interest in becoming involved in a Neighborhood Watch project, assemble a map or a list of homes that you wish to invite to the Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Return the enclosed application to the Westminster Police Department and contact the Community Services Division at 303-658-4422.

After reviewing the application and its contents the Community Services Division will prepare a Neighborhood Watch Starter Kit. The kit will include sample surveys and handouts provided by the City of Westminster. These items can be handed out at your first meeting and will be helpful in generating interaction between your neighbors.

When planning a meeting it is important to find a location that has enough space for everyone to meet comfortably. It is recommended to utilize someone's home, church, school or community center to provide a relaxed atmosphere. Refreshments are encouraged because people will often go to meetings if they know they will partake in the consumption of delicious treats and beverages.

Remember some people may have to bring children. It is encouraged that a separate area is available for children activities, so they don't distract the meeting attendees.

Publicizing the meeting as early as possible is critical so that people will begin to write the meeting date in their calendars and plan for the event. An early announcement also allows neighbors to obtain child care if they so choose. Inviting neighbors 2-3 weeks in advance and reminding them 1 week before the meeting is suggested.

On the date of the meeting, organize the seating and set out the handout materials. Also make pens and paper available for those arriving. Set aside an area to complete name tags. Remember, even by providing simple stick-on name tags will enhance the interaction of your neighbors tremendously.

Westminster Police Department Community Services Division requests 4 weeks advance notice so they may attend your first organizational meeting.

Criteria for Participation in Neighborhood Watch

- ✓ 80% participation in the below programs for single family dwellings, 60% for multi-family dwellings
- ✓ Personal Operation ID inventory with list to be kept by homeowner/tenant
- ✓ Exchange of neighborhood information to include phone numbers, vehicles, etc.
- ✓ Two mandatory neighborhood meetings per year to be set up by Block Captain
- ✓ Mandatory participation in National Night Out to be coordinated by the Block Captain or their designee. This meeting can count as one of the two required meetings
- ✓ Participation of annual meeting of Block Captains (or designee) at the Westminster Police Department. Meeting will be set-up by the Public Information Office
- ✓ Collection of Neighborhood Watch signage and coordination of posting of signage. Signage posting and site selection can be coordinated through the Westminster Police Department Public Information Office

Neighborhood Watch Interest Survey

Dear Neighbor:

My name is _____ and I live at _____. I am currently looking into starting a Neighborhood Watch in our neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch has proven to be a tremendously effective program in reducing crime by getting neighbors to know one another and watch out for each other. Neighborhood Watch will get all of us together two times a year to discuss crime and other problems we see in our neighborhood. Depending on the results of this survey, I will organize the first initial meeting and kick off our Neighborhood Watch program. I am surveying all the residents that would be in our neighborhood and inviting them to join also. At the first meeting we would be discussing the program and how our neighborhood can qualify for Neighborhood Watch signs, the Operation ID program and neighborhood issues. In addition, it will be a great opportunity for you to meet those you may not know who live in our neighborhood.

Please fill out the bottom portion of this note as well as the brief survey and return it to my home no later than _____. This will help me determine the level of interest in Neighborhood Watch and also how many to plan for in our initial meeting.

Thank you.

Yes, I am interested in the program. If possible, I would like to have meetings on _____ nights.

No, I am not interested at this time.

My address is: _____

(Optional Information)

Name _____ Phone _____

Neighborhood Watch Survey

Name: _____

Address: _____

1. How do you feel about crime in our neighborhood?

Fine Okay No Opinion Not Too Safe Angry/Concerned

Comments:

2. Do you feel crime in our neighborhood has increased in the last six months?

Big Increase Slight Increase Same Slight Decrease Big Decrease

Comments:

3. Would you be willing to join with other neighbors in a Neighborhood Watch group?

Yes No

4. What day(s) of the week would be good for our meeting?

5. What time?

6. Would you be willing to be a regular attendant at our Neighborhood Watch meetings held twice a year?

Yes No

7. What issues or concerns should our Neighborhood Watch organization address?

8. Would you be willing to serve as a Neighborhood Watch organizer or on a committee?

Yes No

Westminster Neighborhood Watch Program Application Form

Yes! We would love to host a Neighborhood Watch Program in our neighborhood.

First Meeting Date and Time: _____ Meeting Location: _____
Number of Homes Invited: _____ Number of people expected: _____

Block Captain Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

When completed, please attach a copy of your group's agreed map showing your Neighborhood Watch boundaries and mail or deliver to:

Westminster Police Department
Neighborhood Watch Program
C/O Community Services
9110 Yates Street
Westminster, Colorado 80031

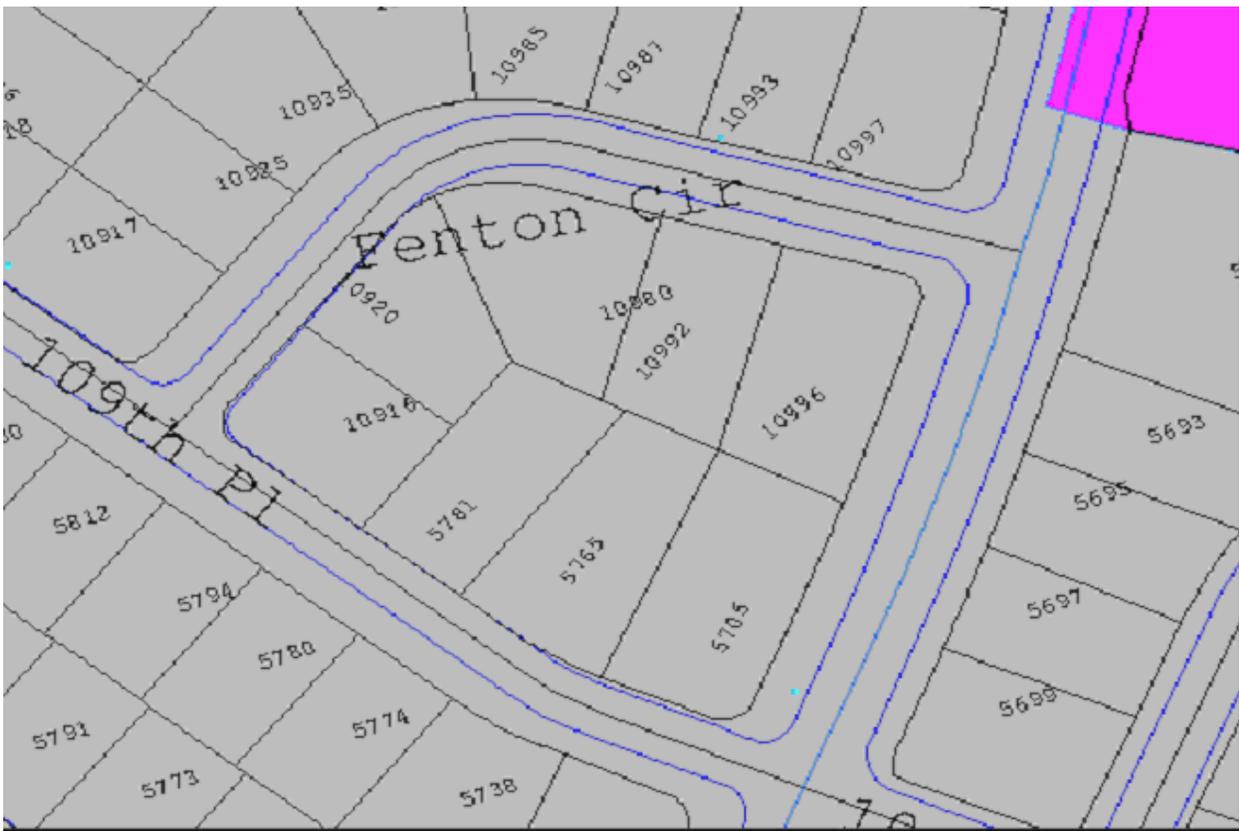
Upon receipt of your application, you will be contacted by Community Services Investigator to further discuss the next step in your Neighborhood Watch program.

Block Map

The block map is very important and a key component to make your Neighborhood Watch program successful. If you are having problems completing a block map you may contact the Community Services Division and we may be able to provide a map similar to the one below that lists addresses in your Neighborhood and surrounding your address.

If you provide the addresses we will provide a map for you to contact neighbors and complete a block map with who is participating in your Neighborhood Watch. The map will be completed in approximately 7 days and available for pick-up at the Police Department.

If you look at this map it is a great example of obtaining your neighbors addresses over your back fence. The addresses on Fenton Circle and 109th place can all maintain a view of each other's property and phone the Police if they observe any criminal or unusual activity. This is the type of involvement you want to gain optimum effectiveness from the program.



Meeting Time

You took the initiative to start this program so you will be known throughout the remainder of this endeavor as the Block Captain. Your job as Block Captain is to organize the meetings and provide an atmosphere for people to openly discuss problems and concerns they have about crime in their neighborhood. The first meeting may have a tendency to run long. Once the meeting starts, your role is simply that of a facilitator to allow everyone an opportunity to speak and keep the meeting moving. Don't let a few people monopolize the entire time period. A suggestion is that the meeting only run for 1 hour and that it starts on time.

The objectives of the first Neighborhood Watch Meeting are to give everyone a chance to get to know each other, to create a neighborhood map, gather phone tree information and answer questions. Be sure to inform your neighbors that you are serving as Block Captain and coordinator of the Neighborhood Watch Program, but you need as much assistance as possible.

Another objective is to discuss the Operation Identification Program. The Police Department encourages everyone to engrave their valuables with a unique personal security number or name and the letters "CO" to signify Colorado. This ensures the property is not desirable to a thief and is easily traceable should it be stolen. An 80% participation in the Operation Identification Program is a requirement of Neighborhood Watch, and to obtain Neighborhood Watch signs in your area.

Once the meeting agenda has been completed or after the pre-arranged time has expired take a few moments to schedule the second meeting. If all organizational issues of Neighborhood Watch have not been covered during the first meeting, schedule a second meeting. The second meeting is a good time to distribute phone lists and collect Operation ID forms. The third and fourth meetings are generally used to discuss specific problems in your neighborhood if your Neighborhood Watch so desires.

The Police Department requires at least two meetings per year, one of which must be National Night Out. National Night Out is the first Tuesday of August every year.

Remember, the Police Department Community Services Division requests 4 weeks advanced notice of your first meeting so we may attend and answer questions. Those officers can present information and answer questions on various topics that may be of interest to you and your neighbors to include, traffic problems, vandalism prevention, dealing with gangs, drug prevention, home security issues, etc.

Neighborhood Watch Program Introductory Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome by the Block Captain.
2. Discussion of the purpose for calling together this Neighborhood Watch.
3. Self-introductions by everyone in the group, include:
 - Names for everyone in your home
 - Your address and description of your house
 - Any pets? (Dogs might alert neighbors to problems)
 - Describe the cars that belong at your home
4. Exchange information about any current problems in the neighborhood.
5. Create a phone communications list of everyone in your group. Include any information from the introductions as needed.
6. Complete a map of the boundaries of your program's neighborhood or use the one provided by the Police Department.
7. Set up an engraver checkout schedule and start an Operation ID program.
8. Set your next meeting date (two meetings a year are required).
9. Closing announcements.

Neighborhood Watch Program

Second Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome by the Block Captain.
2. Follow up issues from the last meeting; welcome new members.
3. Reminder introductions by everyone in the group, include:
 - Names for everyone in your home
 - Your address and description of your house
 - Any pets? (Dogs might alert neighbors to problems)
 - Describe the cars that belong at your home
4. Exchange information about any current problems in the neighborhood.
5. Pass out phone lists.
6. Set your next meeting date (two meetings a year are required).
7. Closing announcements.

National Night Out



On the first Tuesday of every August, the City of Westminster joins forces with thousands of communities nationwide to celebrate National Night Out. Citizens, Police and Fire personnel, businesses, and community leaders come together to communicate with each other and unite against crime. As you can see Neighborhood Watch has a direct relationship to National Night Out.

Neighbors gather for ice cream socials, backyard barbecues and potluck dinners in a variety of locations. Westminster City Council, police officers, and firefighters visit these gatherings to socialize, answer questions, and show kids and residents around some of the equipment we use – police cars, motorcycles, fire trucks, and ambulances.

It is the Block Captain's responsibility to contact the Police Department Community Services Division and let us know the plans for your NNO party. Registration of the parties typically starts in June.

The most effective way to celebrate National Night Out is a block party where various members of your Neighborhood Watch program bring treats and beverages and have a large gathering to interact and discuss issues in your neighborhood. Many neighbors who are not involved may ask why the party is taking place and why is everyone having so much fun. You can tell them it is National Night Out and your Neighborhood Watch meeting. This interest from your neighbors may influence them to participate in their own Neighborhood Watch program.

Remember National Night Out is a mandatory meeting to fulfill the Neighborhood Watch requirements.



Neighborhood Watch Group Contact List

Names:		
Address:		
Home Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Pets:		

Names:		
Address:		
Home Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Pets:		

Names:		
Address:		
Home Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Pets:		

Names:		
Address:		
Home Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Pets:		

Names:		
Address:		
Home Phone:	Work Phone:	Work Phone:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Vehicle Make:	Vehicle Color:	License Plate #:
Pets:		

Neighborhood Watch Operation Identification List

Homeowners are to keep this list private and stored in a secure place in the event their items are ever stolen. Please be sure to update this list as you replace or get new items of value.

Operation Identification Personal Identifier (It is recommended to use your Driver's License number, not your SSN. Example: CO99-999-9999): _____

Household and Personal Items

ITEM	BRAND NAME	MODEL #	SERIAL NUMBER	VALUE \$\$
Television				
Television				
Gaming System				
DVD Player				
Computer				
Computer				
Printer				
iPad, iPod, etc				
Watch				
Watch				
Camera				
Video Camera				
Bicycle				
Bicycle				

Power Tools, Lawn and Garden Equipment

ITEM	BRAND NAME	MODEL #	SERIAL NUMBER	VALUE \$\$

Credit and Charge Cards

COMPANY	CARD NUMBER	COMPANY	CARD NUMBER

Follow-up and Evaluation

The follow-up to your Neighborhood Watch program is critical. As the Block Captain it is your responsibility to maintain contact with the people in your group and ensure that you organize a minimum of two Neighborhood Watch meetings per year. Even if these meetings are strictly for social gatherings, that's fine as long as the group gets together and discusses issues and solutions dealing with neighborhood problems.

One way that you might expand your Neighborhood Watch program is to contact people on the street behind your group. Neighborhood Watch is only as effective as the number of people involved, and while you may have involved everyone on your street, it may be the people living behind you that would watch a burglar try to break into the back of your house. Therefore, we encourage you to spread the Neighborhood Watch concept by finding appropriate Block Captains on the streets behind your home.

An evaluation of your program might also be appropriate. You might work with the Community Services Division to ascertain the crime levels in your neighborhood prior to the program's implementation and then follow up with that six months or a year later to see if the crime problem has been reduced or removed. Since you initiated your program with a needs assessment or a questionnaire, you might consider following up along the same lines by talking with your neighbors concerning how they feel about crime in their neighborhood. You could also pass around a similar questionnaire six months to a year later to see if the problems have changed and if the program has been effective.

The Community Services Division is also available to provide presentations with advanced notice. If you have a specific need that has not been addressed by your group, contact Community Services and find out if an investigator is available to make a presentation on a given subject at one of your meetings.

Finally, the Police Department organizes Block Captain Meetings in an effort to bring together your peers from many different neighborhoods to share information and provide insights into successful Neighborhood Watch programs.

Any questions or concerns can be addressed by contacting the Police Department Community Services Division.