



**YOUR Community, YOUR Neighbors  
OUR RESPONSIBILITY**  
get involved today

# **Columbia Neighborhood Watch**

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**March, 2021**



## **Fund Raising Campaign a success:**

The CoMoGives Fund Raising Campaign was lead by our Treasurer Herb Watchinski. Due to his efforts and that of Aux Board Member Marc Lammy rallying the Broadway Farms group we can mark it as a success.

While we haven't recouped enough to cover our normal budget, we did gain enough to cover our fixed cost with a little leftover to help improve our mission.

We **THANK** the 86 donors that contributed to us that resulted in \$3700 being transferred into our treasury.

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## **Nextdoor**

**Nextdoor** permits communities to easily create private websites to help with communication amongst next-door neighbors and build more powerful neighborhoods. Nextdoor was created based on the idea that the community is among the most important and helpful communities in a person's life. Nextdoor's objective is to utilize technology to help neighbors construct more powerful and much safer neighborhoods.

Go to the web address to get started: [nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com)



## Code Enforcement and Neighborhood Watch Two Great Things That Go Great Together!

Neighborhood Watch volunteers are on the lookout for suspicious and criminal activity. Just as important may be the code violations in a neighborhood. When a neighborhood is cared for and well maintained, it sends a message to criminals that you care and that your neighborhood will not put up with violators of the law. Code violations can also reduce property values and reduce neighborhood morale.

In the City of Columbia, the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS) handles many residential code violations. In FY2020 (October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020), ONS staff handled 4,353 issues. Nearly 3,000 of those were reported by citizens with the remaining identified by ONS staff. We welcome the reports from residents about concerns but also want you to know we as staff are working to be proactive to care for our neighborhoods, too.

In FY2020, ONS handled 835 vegetation cases, 943 nuisances (trash accumulations, aesthetic violations), 256 property maintenance cases (violations on the building like peeling paint and broken windows), 238 unlicensed, inoperable or junk-filled vehicles cases, and 72 zoning cases.

ONS also regulates rental property. All residential rental property in the City must be registered and inspected by the City. This helps to ensure a safe and healthy living environment both for the tenants and the neighboring properties. There are currently more than 27,350 rental units and 9,697 buildings registered with the City.

If there is a problem in your neighborhood, we appreciate you reporting it to us. If a problem is important to you it is also a problem worthy of our investigation. Issues can be reported to Neighborhood Services by calling 874-CITY, emailing [neighborhood@CoMo.gov](mailto:neighborhood@CoMo.gov) or visiting [www.CoMo.gov](http://www.CoMo.gov). Complaints can be reported anonymously.

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**Crime Stoppers** provides a means of communication for members of the public to anonymously provide law enforcement agencies with information on crimes or suspects. Tipster can give information without revealing their identity and may be eligible for a financial reward for the information they provide. For Columbia and Boone County call: (573) 875-8977.

## 13 Things to Do If Your Home Gets Broken Into

1. Call the Police
2. Take Pictures
3. Don't Touch Anything
4. Locate Pets
5. Call Insurance Company
6. Document Everything
7. Don't Throw Out Broken Property
8. Locate Proof of Ownership
9. Secure Your Home
10. Call Your Bank
11. Let Your Neighbors Know
12. Follow Up with the Police
13. Talk to Someone

For the Full Article Click: [GO HERE](#)

[https://www.familyhandyman.com/list/things-to-do-if-your-home-gets-broken-into/?  
cmp=diytipshintsnl&ebid=diytipshintsnl1292021&mid=396192&ehid=4F2C5E33FB90F9648D9B3FCEE3EFC3B7F0A1AB34](https://www.familyhandyman.com/list/things-to-do-if-your-home-gets-broken-into/?cmp=diytipshintsnl&ebid=diytipshintsnl1292021&mid=396192&ehid=4F2C5E33FB90F9648D9B3FCEE3EFC3B7F0A1AB34)

Courtesy of Family Handyman Magazine

**Facebook: Columbia Neighborhood Watch**

**internet: [www.columbianeighborhoodwatch.org](http://www.columbianeighborhoodwatch.org)**

# **Smart phone apps that can save your life in an emergency**

**In emergencies there are smartphone apps with a distress signal tool at your disposal. You can download these apps and use now in times of dire need. Here are the top five picks:**

Important: Most of these apps use your phone's GPS and location tracking, which may impact and decrease its battery life.

## **1. Silent Beacon: Emergency Alert System**

Silent Beacon, available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#), is described by its creators as "the emergency alert system for the digital age." **It is a free app** and service that uses GPS-tracking to send your location to a custom set of contacts, including 911 or emergency services, through a "distress message."

This distress message can be sent with a touch of the app's button during emergencies when the beacon is activated. Silent Beacon is simple, straightforward and for a free app, it does its job well - send a message and your location via text notification in a jiffy. You never know, that may be enough to save you from trouble one day.

## **2. bSafe: Personal Safety App**

bSafe is another emergency alert app system for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) that will notify up to four selected contacts, called "Guardians" by the app, in an event of an emergency.

**bSafe's free version** lets you send out a distress message by hitting its SOS button.

This notifies your "Guardians" of the emergency via text message and provides them with your location. bCall's premium service costs \$20 a year with a special \$30 promo price for a two-year subscription.

## **3. Companion: Mobile Personal Safety**

If you are looking for a free safety alert app that has real-time location tracking, try the [iOS](#) and [Android](#) app Companion.

Similar to other safety apps, Companion lets you pick your own contacts as your emergency alert recipients.

## **Smart phone apps cont'**

These "companions," as the app calls them, will then receive a text message with a link to a webpage showing a real-time map of your location.

If your arrival is delayed or you divert from your trip's path, your headphones get unplugged or if your phone's sensors detect a sudden change in your speed, the app will ask you if everything's OK. You'll have 15 seconds to confirm to the app that you're fine and if not, it will proceed to notify your "companions." The app will also give a quick way to call the police in an event of an emergency.

### **4. LifeLine Response - Panic Button and Safety App**

While other emergency alert apps require them to be opened to send out a distress message, Lifeline Response does it a little bit differently - it is activated by holding your finger on your phone's screen.

Once the app is activated and your finger is removed from the screen, it starts a series of countdown timers that culminates in a call from LifeLine Response's Verification Center.

If the emergency is verified by the center either via verbal confirmation, by a silent alarm code or by non-reply, LifeLine contacts 911 dispatchers directly and provides them your GPS coordinates. Your LifeLine contacts will likewise receive the same emergency information via text and email.

LifeLine Response's service is not free. Monthly subscriptions start at \$5 but it offers a free 14-day trial. The app is available for both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

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## **Community Policing & Neighborhood Watch**

*Police and citizens often come into contact with each other for reasons other than criminal investigation. In addition to enforcing criminal law, police officers often engage in community service. Community service may include providing information and/or assistance to people in need, as well as offering youth education and coordinating community outreach efforts.*



**Did you know that you can shop on Amazon and they will donate to Columbia Neighborhood Watch and it won't cost you a dime?**

1. Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). (same products as Amazon)
2. Sign in with your Amazon username & password and Choose Your Charity - [Columbia Neighborhood Watch](#)
3. Begin shopping!

Once you've selected your charity everything else functions the same as with Amazon. Shop for your favorite products or the perfect gift. Most products are eligible on Amazon Smile—if not, you'll be notified. You can checkout normally as well. **No extra cost is passed onto you**—Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to Columbia Neighborhood Watch!

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**Check out charities** at [www.give.org](https://www.give.org) or [www.charitynavigator.org](https://www.charitynavigator.org) before giving any money. Make donations directly to the organizations you know .