

# WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



## STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

- Prevent Crime
- Improve Safety
- Build Community

# WELCOME TO NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The Washington County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) has long supported community members playing an active role in caring for their neighborhoods. We stand ready to empower communities of all sizes to be safe and effective in building safe neighborhoods through Neighborhood Watch.

Frequently, community members discuss forming a Neighborhood Watch in response to specific incidents; possibly a car or home break-in that gets everyone talking, seeking opportunities for increased security. Regardless of timing or reasoning, this program can be beneficial for all neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood Watch Program has grown in safety and effectiveness since its inception in the 1970s. Today, this program encourages participants to get to know their neighbors, be observant, and work closely with local law enforcement by promptly reporting all emergent and non-emergent information.

**Neighborhood Watch Works** — in more ways than you might expect!

- Improves livability and increases sense of community.
- Improves home and property security.
- Active partnership with the WCSO.
- Neighbors learn to observe, identify, and report problems or suspicious activity.



## LET'S GET ORGANIZED!

- ☑ Determine the area you want to organize. This is the area you consider "your neighborhood." The larger the area, the greater the protection.
- ☑ Talk to your neighbors and find those willing to help form your initial group of participants. Determine the best time for your initial meeting and overview presentation with the WCSO.
- ☑ Contact [PublicAffairs@co.washington.or.us](mailto:PublicAffairs@co.washington.or.us) to connect with your area representative and schedule a presentation date.
- ☑ For in-person meetings, find a nearby meeting location such as a school, church or other public meeting place that will support use of audio/visual aids. For virtual meetings, we utilize Zoom and will provide you with an invitation link to distribute to all your neighbors.

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## LET'S GET ORGANIZED! (continued from the front)

- ☑ Invite your neighbors, ideally at least two weeks before the meeting, either by paper invitation or email. We also recommend reminder notifications a few days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- ☑ Map out your neighborhood by listing family names and contact information for each residence. (A screenshot from your online mapping service can be helpful for this!) If you don't have everyone's contact information, you can gather missing information at the meeting or shortly after.
- ☑ Attend the presentation. Plan between 1 to 2 hours, depending on the level of active participation from neighbors. During this presentation, your neighbors will learn how to:
  - Identify concerns and develop an action plan
  - Learn to identify suspicious activity
  - Learn how to report confidently to 9-1-1 or non-emergency
  - Learn where potentials for crime exist specific to your neighborhood
  - Plan a meeting time to discuss ongoing roles and Neighborhood Watch signage
- ☑ Stay connected. Once your neighborhood is organized, you will want to maintain crime-reducing habits, encourage reporting, and neighborly connections. Support continued interest by planning neighborhood meetings, picnics, block parties and participating in National Night Out.

Once your Neighborhood Watch is off the ground, WCSO continues to support watchful neighborhoods with:

- Community safety and training presentations upon request.
- A monthly "Ask WCSO" question/answer column for your neighborhood newsletter.
- Direct contact to answer your questions.
- Coordinated efforts to further address neighborhood crime issues.

### NON-EMERGENCIES 503-629-0111

- Abandoned vehicles
- Suspicious persons or vehicles
- Anything out of place
- Noise disturbances
- Graffiti

### EMERGENCIES 911

- Immediate threat of harm or danger
- Serious injuries
- Endangered persons
- Missing children
- Crimes occurring now



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WASHINGTON COUNTY

To learn more about Neighborhood Watch for your community, contact: [PublicAffairs@co.washington.or.us](mailto:PublicAffairs@co.washington.or.us)

Connect with us on social @WCSOOregon or visit our website: [WCSOOregon.org](http://WCSOOregon.org)