



by
neighbors who care

**A Community
Crime Prevention**

**Program
Sponsored by
the Fairfax County
Police Department**

*Prepared in the public interest by the Fairfax County Police Department
10600 Page Avenue Fairfax, Virginia 22030*

Accredited by the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.

A Guide For Coordinators And Members

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared to assist you in planning and organizing your Neighborhood Watch. For additional assistance, call the Crime Prevention Officer at the Police District Station serving the area where you live.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM BENEFITS

Some neighborhoods may be more susceptible to crime than others; however, all should consider establishing a Neighborhood Watch Program. No matter what type of neighborhood you live in, condominium, garden apartment, townhome, or single family home, the benefits are obvious. They include:

PREVENTION OF CRIME

Fairfax County crime statistics show Neighborhood Watch Programs have aided the Police Department in reducing residential burglary by almost 60 percent from 1980 to 1993. This occurred even while the population increased by almost 250,000 people. In addition to reductions in residential burglary, Neighborhood Watch Programs have contributed to substantial declines in thefts of property, vandalism, fraud, sexual assaults and even traffic—related offenses. Watch Programs have even impacted upon crimes in commercial areas of their communities as well as in churches and schools.

The establishment of a Neighborhood Watch Program in a low-crime area is added assurance it will remain safe. Crime is rarely stationary and often moves from one neighborhood to another.

GREATER AWARENESS OF CRIME

Home security and personal safety are enhanced as residents become more aware of the threat of crime. Exposure to crime prevention techniques improves a citizen's ability to remove and reduce opportunities for criminals to act.

ENHANCED REPORTING OF SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES

Residents are more aware of who belongs in the community and are more inclined to report suspicious persons and activities to the police. Typically, as the calls for suspicious activities increase, the actual numbers of crimes committed decrease.

SERVES AS A WARNING TO CRIMINALS

Neighborhood Watch signs alert criminals that residents are concerned about crime and will call the police when suspicious activity is observed. However, signs alone are of little deterrent value when not backed up by an actively patrolling Neighborhood Watch Program.

PROMOTES NEIGHBORLINESS

Neighborhood Watch encourages residents to interact with each other, sharing information about work schedules, vacation plans, types of vehicles belonging to their households, etc. It also encourages neighbors to observe the property of others and occasionally attend meetings to strengthen neighborhood safety and security.

ACCESS TO CRIME DATA

Crime often moves from one neighborhood to another. Obviously, it is important for neighborhoods to be informed about crime trends that may threaten them. Crime Prevention Officers can help identify trends and patterns through crime analysis and routinely notify Neighborhood Watch Coordinators of crime related problems.

INCREASES ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS

The Neighborhood Watch Program serves as a network through which the Police Department can collect and disseminate information on crime. Although most Watch members should realistically expect to see little in the way of real crime, the following two examples illustrate the possible benefits of Neighborhood Watch to both citizens and the criminal justice system.

A Neighborhood Watch Block Captain, helping a neighbor clear some snow, in mid afternoon, observed a young adult pull into the driveway of another neighbor. The Block Captain greeted the youth whom he did not recognize. The citizen then positioned himself to observe the subject's next move. The subject picked up a garden tool near the kitchen door and broke out the glass, thus gaining entry. The Block Captain then used the phone of the neighbor he was helping to report the event. He gave the police the vehicle license number, description of the suspect and the location of the point of entry. Since the citizen had not delayed in calling the police, the suspect was arrested as he exited the home he had just burglarized. The car he had driven had been stolen in another burglary. All told, the suspect confessed to a total of seven burglaries.

Another example involved the abduction and sexual assault of a young woman. While experiencing car trouble, the woman was abducted at gunpoint and taken to a neighboring jurisdiction where she was sexually assaulted behind an elementary school. The investigation revealed the victim could identify her assailant and his vehicle. However, there were no apparent suspects. Fortunately the school was in the middle of a Neighborhood Watch area. The Police Crime Prevention Officer outlined the details of the crime to the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator who polled the Watch members to determine if anyone had written down the license plate of the suspect vehicle. Luckily, an elderly resident had been walking his dog on the evening of the assault and had written down the license number because he felt the car looked suspicious behind the school. With the license number, the police were able to make an arrest. The suspect was positively identified by the victim and a conviction was obtained.

STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Unlike many law enforcement services, Neighborhood Watch can be initiated by citizens. Circumstances which serve as a catalyst for programs usually include:

- * A neighborhood is victimized by burglary, vandalism or other crimes.
- * Citizens perceive that there is a neighborhood crime problem even though there may have been only a few isolated incidents.
- * Because of positive publicity about Neighborhood Watch and its successes, residents determine they should participate in the program.
- * After crime analysis, the Police Department determines a residential neighborhood is experiencing a disproportionate amount of crime.

PLANNING

Frequently, the planning phase of the Neighborhood Watch is overlooked. All too often programs begin with a mass meeting at which the benefits of Neighborhood Watch are detailed. Although those in attendance are motivated by the potential for preventing crime, they are often confused as to how to organize to achieve the desired results. Therefore, it is extremely important careful consideration be given to establishing a sound foundation in order to enhance organization and program longevity.

FORMATION OF A PLANNING COMMITTEE

Prior to embarking on a large scale Neighborhood Watch Program, a small group of concerned citizens and a Police Department Crime Prevention Officer should meet and plan the organization of the program.

~ The planning committee may consist of selected members of the civic or homeowners' association or perhaps a committee of the association formed for the purpose of establishing a Watch Program. If no such homeowners' group exists, members of the committee should represent several different blocks within the neighborhood since some may subsequently serve as block captains. Generally, the resident who contacted the Police Department will assume the responsibility for choosing and convening the committee.

FUNCTIONS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Identify Crime Problems

One of the primary functions of the committee is to determine the extent and nature of the crime in the neighborhood. This can be done on the basis of crime analysis information which the Crime Prevention Officer can obtain. A lack of crime should be used to promote the program as well.

Neighborhood Watch should be viewed as a way of maintaining a safe community, not just eliminating an existing crime problem.

Obtain a Map of the Neighborhood

The map should show all the streets or roads to be covered by the Watch program. If a map is not available, the committee should design one.

Identify a Potential Watch Coordinator and Block Captains

Typically, the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator will come from within the planning committee. Since a captain may be needed for each block or road, the committee may need to recruit residents who are not members of the committee. In doing so, the committee should use a map to determine where road and block captains are needed. In most instances, volunteers can be found through referrals by other residents. After identifying potential volunteers, contact them and explain the duties of the block captains. Attempt to obtain a commitment so they can be introduced at the Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Establish a Date and Time for Neighborhood Watch Meeting

The date and time must be coordinated with the Crime Prevention Officer as he or she is likely to have a number of other commitments. Make sure the Watch meeting doesn't conflict with other community meetings which may involve a number of families.

Choose a Convenient Meeting Facility

The meeting site *should* be as close to the neighborhood as possible. Most churches will gladly accommodate such groups. Other possibilities include schools, community centers, police stations, fire stations, etc.

Advertise Meeting

Send out notice of the Neighborhood Watch meeting including the date, time and location. Copies of the notice or posters may be placed in suitable public locations, such as church bulletin boards or other community locations. Signs such as sandwich boards may be posted at the entrances to the community.

CONDUCTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH TRAINING SESSION

Select a Spokesperson One member of the planning committee must serve as facilitator during the neighborhood meeting. Normally, this will be the member who has agreed to serve as coordinator.

Have all attendees sign in with address and phone number to facilitate later contact. Surveys may be handed out at this time to assist scheduling of patrols.

Refreshments

If possible, the committee should provide refreshments after the meeting. Refreshments provide a relaxed atmosphere for neighbors to meet.

Meeting Agenda The following is an example of a typical agenda for a Neighborhood Watch training session.

1. Purpose of meeting: Committee Chairperson
2. Introductions: Committee Chairperson or selected Coordinator
3. Brief background of committee's activities: Committee Chairperson
4. Distribution of Neighborhood Watch materials: Crime Prevention Officer
5. Crime trends in Fairfax County: Crime Prevention Officer
6. Crime Trends in your police district: Crime Prevention Officer
7. Explanation of the Neighborhood Watch Program: Crime Prevention Officer
 - Patrol Procedures
 - Home Security
 - Operation I.D.
8. Request volunteers for any unfilled positions such as block captains
9. Inform attendees their block captains will be contacting them in the near future

NOTE: Every effort should be made to start and end the meeting on time.

Organizing a Watch Program

Even though Neighborhood Watch is a relatively simple concept of preventing neighborhood crime, it requires organization if citizens and the Police Department are to realize its many benefits. Without a strong organization, members often lose interest after the crime problem has diminished. Once interest has waned, it has proven difficult to recreate interest and action.

The following organizational considerations are essential to a successful Neighborhood Watch Program:

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH COMMITTEE

The Neighborhood Watch Coordinator and block captains are the most crucial positions in a Watch Program. They provide leadership and coordination and serve as the Neighborhood Watch steering committee. The committee should have the following responsibilities:

To maintain and expand the program to include as many residents as possible

To set forth program objectives and strategies in consultation with the Police Department that will make the neighborhood safer

To plan and provide for the implementation of crime prevention programs which are beneficial to the neighborhood

To establish and maintain files and records

To plan Neighborhood Watch meetings and notify members

To assess the success of the program and provide feedback to residents

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COORDINATOR

Serve as liaison between the Police Department's Crime Prevention Officer and the block captains. The coordinator is responsible for disseminating information from the Police Department to the block captains

Serve as chairperson of the Neighborhood Watch committee

Preside over Neighborhood Watch meetings

Seek program resources and materials and make them available to block captains for distribution to residents. Direct the activities of the block captains

Provide reports to the civic association if one exists

Maintain a master list of all Watch members

Work with block captains to develop specific crime prevention projects for the neighborhood

Attend police district coordinators' meetings scheduled by the Crime Prevention Officer

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BLOCK CAPTAINS

Serve as liaison between the Watch coordinator and the residents

Recruit new Watch members, striving for 100 percent participation

Assist coordinator in planning and conducting meetings and activities

Maintain list of block members, including name, address, work and home phone, hours they cannot participate in patrolling (to facilitate scheduling). Other information may be collected such as special health and medical problems and emergency contacts (see form on page 6).

Prepare and distribute maps of block or road containing above information to the residents (see form on page 8)

Notify residents of meetings and training sessions

Designate work assignments as needed. These may include: secretarial; fund raising to purchase magnetic signs, patrol identifiers (hats, vests, arm bands etc.) electric engravers; walking or mobile patrols or window watchers; vacation house checks; and checking on house bound residents (elderly, infirm, single parents, primary caregivers)

ROLE OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Involvement of the Police Department in a Neighborhood Watch Program typically includes:

Providing initial training of Watch coordinator and committee members

Maintaining contact with Watch coordinator

Notifying coordinator of any crime trends or patterns that may threaten the neighborhood

Meeting with Neighborhood Watch committee on a periodic basis to address crime problems and plan strategies

Provide ongoing Neighborhood Watch and crime awareness training to residents

Serve as a resource for acquiring speakers for meetings, obtaining handout materials and visual aids, and providing signs, decals, etc.

SAMPLE

NEIGHBORHOOD DATA SHEET

Address: _____ Phone No.: _____

Family name: _____ Your first name: _____ Your work phone: _____

Spouse's first name: _____ Spouse's work phone: _____

Individuals to contact in an emergency:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Vehicles:

Year/Make	Color	License No.
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Types of Neighborhood Watch Programs

Neighborhood Watch is simply a crime prevention concept that calls for citizens to watch out for their neighbors' property. Knowing this, criminals are generally unwilling to risk detection, so they either don't commit the crime or go elsewhere.

Because neighborhoods are different in terms of geography, population, and the extent and nature of crime, Neighborhood Watch programs must vary from area to area if they are to be successful. Whereas criminals may be dissuaded from committing a crime in one neighborhood using passive observation, they may be willing to take the risk in a more rural community using the same basic strategy.

Some of the basic program variations include:

Passive Observation

Passive observation is an activity residents must always be involved in. Residents must always be on the lookout for suspicious or unusual activity. Passive observation is not recommended as a patrol substitute except in the smallest and most compact communities.

Window Watch

A scheduled activity, window watchers should set a routine to follow. Whether checking every 15 minutes or more or less often, they should be aware of the responsibility to make an effort to stay to their routine. Window watchers are often residents house bound for reasons of health, advanced age, disability, being a single parent or being a primary caregiver in the home.

Walking Patrols




Many Neighborhood Watch programs assign residents to walk within a several block area to actively look for suspicious activities. Active, scheduled, patrols are only done in pairs (i.e., husband and wife or two neighbors) during periods that crime is most likely to occur. Upon observing suspicious activities, walking patrols are to contact the police either by radioing their base station operator, using a cellular phone, or going to a preplanned location to use a neighbor's phone. Patrol members are cautioned against personal intervention or confrontation. Unique decals on residents' vehicles are helpful in identifying vehicles that belong in the neighborhood. Obtaining and issuing decals should be the responsibility of the local civic or homeowners' association.



Mobile Patrols

Such patrols are frequently used in larger communities or where homes are spaced a considerable distance from one another, making window watch and foot patrols impractical. Mobile patrols are normally used during high-crime periods and many use citizen band (OB) radios for communicating suspicious activities or persons. Other forms of communications available are FM band hand-held radios or cellular telephones.

NOTE: *Neighborhood Watch is designed to prevent, detect and report crimes. Enforcement action is always left to the Police Department.*

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH BLOCK MAP

		
Name: _____ H Phone: _____ W Phone: _____ Address: _____ Vehicle: _____	Name: _____ H Phone: _____ W Phone: _____ Address: _____ Vehicle: _____	Name: _____ H Phone: _____ W Phone: _____ Address: _____ Vehicle: _____

	
Name: _____ H Phone: _____ W Phone: _____ Address: _____ Vehicle: _____	Name: _____ H Phone: _____ W Phone: _____ Address: _____ Vehicle: _____

Although this information is considered to be basic to most programs, others require block captains to collect additional information. Such data can be presented in booklet form with the Watch Coordinator retaining the master copy for all blocks.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Some of the more common elements of Watch programs include:

Neighborhood Watch Signs

Signs are extremely important to the program because they put the potential criminal on notice that a Watch program exists and that citizens are trained to observe and report. Signs will never be erected unless there is an active and organized program.

Neighborhood Watch Decals

In many communities each home participating in the program is designated by a decal. These decals are reminders that there is a Watch program and, equally important, that the resident is security conscious.

Program Growth

Recruitment is a much overlooked aspect of the growth in the Neighborhood Watch Program. The national average life expectancy of a Neighborhood Watch is about 18 months. Some of our Watches have been in continuous operation since 1979. The most successful Watches attempt to recruit small groups of residents two or three times a year. Some Crime Prevention Officers offer regularly scheduled training sessions several times a year at a central location to which members of all Watches are invited. Community based training is dependant upon the availability of the Crime Prevention Officer.

Vehicle Stickers

Some Neighborhood Watch groups provide distinctive vehicle stickers which identify residents' vehicles. This does not imply that vehicles without stickers are suspicious, but indicates they may require closer scrutiny.

Mobile Patrol Vehicle Identification

Mobile patrols often utilize magnetic signs on the sides of their vehicles identifying them as Neighborhood Watch patrols. Indicate the name of the community and say "Neighborhood Watch." Use of the word "Patrol" is not recommended.

Newsletter Most Neighborhood Watch groups have found that a periodic newsletter keeps residents informed and interested in the program. It also serves to share information about past and upcoming events, as well as instruct residents how they can prevent crime.

Property Identification (see page 13)

Home Security Survey

Although Neighborhood Watch is a community based program, it is most successful when individuals are aware of the threat of crime and take some individual action to reduce or remove the opportunity for it within their own homes. A home security survey is used to identify security weaknesses around the residence so corrective action can be taken. You may arrange for a home security survey by calling the Police District Station serving your area.

Safe House Program The Safe House Program is most beneficial in communities with large numbers of children or near an elementary school. The program requires identifying one house on a block where children can seek adult assistance in an emergency. The Safe House Program is run by the Traffic Safety Section.

Active Patrols Patrols are a very important part of any successful Watch Program. For detailed information see the "Guidelines for Community Vehicle and Foot Patrol" section beginning on page 13.

Other projects popular with Neighborhood Watch groups include:

Proposing crime prevention legislation to local and state elected officials

Regularly scheduled calls or visits to elderly and infirm residents Assigning specific residents to check on homes of neighbors away from their homes on vacation, etc.

CPR and first aid classes

Picnics, parties and other social activities which build neighborliness

Notifying the proper authorities of damaged or missing street signs, traffic control signs and street lights

Surveying the neighborhood to ensure proper house numbering. Clear and visible house numbers are vital to police, fire and rescue personnel in locating your home in an emergency and are required by law.

MEETINGS AND TRAINING SESSIONS Individual Neighborhood Watch groups should conduct meetings periodically to discuss activity in their neighborhoods. Coordinators and block captains should attend.

The Crime Prevention Officer will conduct sessions for new participants.

Topics which will be covered include:

- Home security
- Operation Identification
- Calling the Police Department (emergency vs. non—emergency)
- What information the Police Department needs, types of responses
- Explanation of patrol procedures
- Stressing safety practices and limits of patrol member’s authority

Each Police District Station conducts periodic meetings for the coordinators from all the district’s Watch groups. These meetings usually consist of:

- * Updates on crime trends in the district and Fairfax County
- * Exchange of information among coordinators and Crime Prevention Officers
- * Distribution of crime prevention materials to the coordinators Training relevant to the Neighborhood Watch Program

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING GUIDELINES

WHY SHOULD YOU CALL THE POLICE

You risk nothing if you call the police and you are wrong. Consider what you risk if you fail to call the police and you are wrong.

Successful efforts to combat crime require the cooperative involvement of police and citizens. The police cannot be everywhere. For this reason, success against crime is dependent on citizen cooperation and involvement. Many crimes would not be committed if more citizens were alert to suspicious activity and notified the police.

WHEN YOU SHOULD CALL THE POLICE

Whenever you observe suspicious events, even though you may not be the only person observing them, call the police. Never think the next person will do what you should. The police would rather get numerous calls on the same event than none at all.

Often citizens fail to call because they are not sure if what they see is suspicious. If you are in doubt, call the police immediately. Don’t wait to talk it over with friends or neighbors. Valuable police response time is lost this way.

Don’t be concerned about bothering us because you won’t. Don’t dwell on your possible embarrassment if your call should prove to be unfounded. Think instead of what could have happened had you not called. You or your loved ones could become the victims of a criminal act.

WHAT IS SUSPICIOUS?

A stranger enters your neighbor’s home while your neighbor is away or someone crosses your neighbor’s yard with not apparent lawful purpose; anyone trying to open a neighbor’s door; a moving truck or van pulled up to a neighbor’s home while they are gone. Remember, burglaries often occur at times when they should be most obvious - in broad daylight, in full view of observers with no effort at subterfuge.

Someone carrying property such as television sets, radios, stereos, etc., at an unusually late hour or in an unusual place, especially if it does not appear that the property is newly purchased.

The sound of shattering glass could signal a possible burglary, vandalism or larceny in progress.

Anyone peering into vehicles while walking down a street or someone removing tags, gasoline or parts from a car; someone attempting to enter a car using a coat hanger or other device. Never assume that it is the owner who has locked the keys in the car. Be suspicious of anyone tampering with the hood or trunk of a car.

An improperly parked car or an abandoned vehicle, or someone leaving one car and driving away in another — these may be signs of a stolen vehicle.

Anyone being forced into a vehicle could be the victim of a possible abduction.

Persons loitering around schools, parks and isolated areas, or in the neighborhood. Loiterers could be possible sex offenders or burglars.

Anyone on school, church, or cemetery property after dark and not taking part in an approved activity.

Business transactions conducted from a vehicle and often involving juveniles, a steady flow of strangers to and from a particular house on a regular basis at unusual times or late hours. This could indicate drug sales or a fencing operation.

Offers of goods or repair work at unusually low prices could indicate stolen property or some kind of fraud.

All fights, screams and loud noises (such as explosions) should be reported as possible crimes or life—threatening events could be taking place.

Door-to-door solicitors without properly issued licenses. They could be vending illegally or they could be casing houses in your neighborhood.

HOW DO YOU CALL THE POLICE

Use the police, fire and rescue emergency number, 911, for crimes in progress and events which are life-threatening or immediately damaging to property. Call the non-emergency number, 691-2131, to report crimes which already occurred and when the suspect is no longer in the area or to advise police of suspicious activity.

WHAT INFORMATION THE POLICE NEED

To report any suspicious event, use the police non—emergency number, 691—2131. For events that are life threatening or immediately damaging to property, call 911.

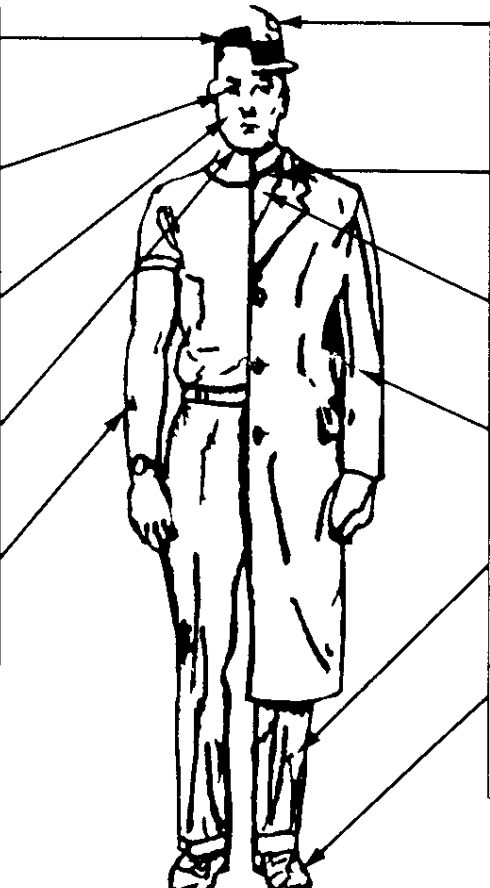
You will be asked for your name, address and phone number. This information is requested in case additional contact with you is necessary, but you do not have to provide this information if you do not want to. If you wish, you may provide us with just a call back number we can use if our initial information was wrong or the situation has changed before an officer arrives. Any information provided to the police department is kept in confidence. If you do not want personal contact with the responding officer, say so.

The most important information needed by the police is:

- What happened
- When/Where
- If anyone is hurt
- License numbers and vehicle descriptions
- Direction of travel
- Description(s) of suspect(s)
- If there are weapons involved

SUSPECT DESCRIPTION

FILL OUT AS BEST YOU CAN
GIVE TO THE FIRST POLICE OFFICER ON THE SCENE

SEX	RACE	AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	WEAPON TYPE	
HAIR						HAT (color, type)
GLASSES TYPE						TIE
COMPLEXION						SHIRT
SCARS/MARKS						COAT
TATTOOS						TROUSERS
			SHOES			

AUTO LICENSE, MAKE, COLOR	DIRECTION OF TRAVEL
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

By acting quickly and calmly, your request for police service could foil a crime, help to identify suspects involved in other crimes or deter a criminal act by letting potential suspects know that you and your neighbors are alert to suspicious activity, suspicious vehicles and suspicious persons.

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

It has been proven that in neighborhoods where citizens have joined together to look out for each other's safety, the incidence of burglaries and other crimes against property has been significantly reduced. Knowing who your neighbors are is the first step in this program. The next step is to begin a Neighborhood Watch in your community.

WITH THREE EASY STEPS YOU CAN BE PART OF NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH!

1. CITIZEN PATROL

Join with your neighbors in volunteering your eyes and your ears on a regular basis to watch your neighborhood and report anything suspicious to the Fairfax County Police Department. Thieves and vandals are likely to go elsewhere when they know Neighborhood Watch is "all eyes" for them! Contact the Crime Prevention Officer at your police district station for assistance in organizing and training citizen patrol volunteers in your neighborhood.

2. FREE HOME SECURITY INSPECTION

A qualified, trained Fairfax County Police officer or auxiliary officer will inspect the locks, doors and windows of your home with you. Exterior lighting, landscaping and other factors affecting the protection of your home from burglary also will be reviewed. The officer will make recommendations for improving your home security. You can arrange for a free inspection at your convenience by calling your district station's Crime Prevention Officer.

3. PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

A Fairfax County Police officer will instruct you on how to properly mark your property so it can be identified and how to make an inventory of your valuables. Property identification discourages thieves and makes fencing of stolen property more difficult. When recovered stolen property can be identified, it can be used as evidence against the thief and also can be returned by police to its owner.

Engravers may be borrowed and forms obtained from Fairfax County Public Libraries. Engrave your complete driver's license number (all nine digits, which is your social security number on Virginia operator's licenses) and the letters VA or the appropriate abbreviation for the state in which your driver's license is issued (i.e., VA123456789). Use of this number is recommended because of the speed with which the property owner's name and address can be obtained through police computer systems.

Include the Following Information in Your Inventory Record:

- * Your social security number
- * Item marked, Make, Model, Size/Color, Serial Number, Where marked

Keep this information in a safe location!

Guidelines For Community Vehicle Or Foot Patrol

A community patrol program requires careful planning if it is to operate safely and effectively. Active patrols are an integral part of the Neighborhood Watch success story. Communities establishing citizen patrols should keep in mind the following guidelines:

PURPOSE OF A CITIZEN PATROL

The purpose of community patrol is to use highly visible citizen observers to deter crime. Patrol members report crimes and suspicious situations to the police. They participate in educating their community in public safety practices.

PATROL PROCEDURES

1. **The purpose of community patrol is to observe and report. Patrol members shall not become involved with a suspect.**
2. The patrol area should be well defined.
3. Only residents of the defined community should participate in the patrol. Patrol members must be at least 18 years of age.
4. Patrol members must have participated in a training session.
5. Patrol teams shall consist of at least two members. Mobile patrols which rely upon two-way radios for communications also need a base station operator.
6. **Patrol members do not possess police powers.** Each member is liable as an individual for civil and criminal charges should he or she exceed their authority.
7. Patrol members shall not challenge anyone. The patrol's visible presence should be a deterrent to most criminal activity. If a suspicious situation is found, the patrol should call the police using the methods set forth in the training for their community.
8. Patrol members shall not pursue vehicles or suspects nor attempt to enforce traffic laws.
9. Patrol teams should attempt to patrol in a random fashion rather than in an observable pattern.
10. Patrol members shall not carry firearms, night sticks, mace, or any type of weapon.
11. Patrol members shall not report for duty under the influence of intoxicants.
12. Members violating patrol procedures may be banned from participation in the community patrol.
13. Patrol members should take notes on suspicious situations. The notes may become evidence if the situation becomes a criminal matter. The notes should be neat and legible. A copy should be given to the Watch Coordinator and the original saved for one year. The notes might be subpoenaed by the court or used by the patrol member for recall during court testimony.

SAMPLE

BASE STATION LOG SHEET

Neighborhood Watch

Date: _____ Base Operator: _____

INCIDENT: (use reverse side if needed)

Location: _____

Nature: _____

Vehicle Information:

License Number: _____ State: _____ Make: _____

Model: _____ Color: _____ Other: _____

Direction of travel: _____

Description of driver and/or other occupants: _____

SAMPLE

MOBILE UNIT LOG SHEET

Neighborhood Watch

Date: _____ Tour Begin Time: _____ Tour End Time: _____

Mileage start: _____ Mileage end: _____ Number of incidents recorded: _____

Patrol member, s names: _____

Type of incident _____ Police Called? _____

Time: _____ Location: _____

Entry By: _____

Narrative:

CRIME PREVENTION SERVICES

**CALL YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR
CRIME PREVENTION SERVICES**

The Fairfax County Police Department offers a wide range of crime prevention services to citizens. They include steps you can take to avoid being the victim of crime against property. The services are free and appointments may be made by calling the police district station nearest your home. The locations and telephone numbers of the district stations are:

	Station No.	Crime Prevention No.
Mount Vernon District Station..... 2511 Parkers Lane	360-8400	360-4586
McLean District Station..... 1437 Balls Hill Road	556-7750	734-0756
Mason District Station..... 6507 Columbia Pike	256-8035	354-5889
Reston District Station..... 12000 Bowman Towne Drive	478-0904	478-0799
Franconia District Station..... 6121 Franconia Road	922-0889	922-8263
West Springfield District Station..... 6140 Rolling Road	644-7377	644-5026
Fair Oaks District Station..... 12300 Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway	591-0966	352-2163

Police facilities are staffed 24 hours daily and may be called at any time to arrange an appointment for a home security survey or to schedule presentations to groups on crime prevention.

Police, Fire and Rescue Emergency Telephone: **911**
Police Non—Emergency Telephone: **691—2131**

Emergency TDD for Hearing Impaired Citizens: **280—1368**