

**MOSES LAKE
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH
CAPTAIN'S MANUAL**



**WELCOME
THIS IS A
CRIME WATCH
COMMUNITY**



**WE IMMEDIATELY REPORT
ALL SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES
TO OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT**

What is Neighborhood Watch?

- 1) Citizens and police working in partnership to reduce crimes and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods.
- 2) A cohesive body of concerned citizens addressing issues that concern the entire community.
- 3) Neighbors getting to know each other, taking the time to care about each other and working together in a program of mutual assistance.



Why Neighborhood Watch?

Whether you live in a high crime area or not, a Neighborhood Watch Program holds many rewards to your family and neighborhood.

Neighborhood Watch programs instill greater sense of security and reduce the fear of crime in your community.

The residents that live in an area know the needs of the area better than anyone. By communicating with each other and working together as a team, your community can make a difference.

Benefits of Neighborhood Watch

- 1) Reducing the risk of becoming a victim of crime. The risk is reduced because participants are taught to take preventative measures to substantially decrease the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime. Neighborhood Watch programs reduce the risks of home burglaries, vandalism, personal assault and fraud.
- 2) Being better prepared to respond to suspicious activity. Communication between the neighborhood and the police department is crucial. Part of the Neighborhood Watch program is learning how to identify and report suspicious activity. You will also learn to provide the police with the information that they need to resolve the issue.

- 3) Information that impacts your neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch Programs are designed to keep participants apprised of trends in criminal activity so that they will be better prepared to prevent it from occurring in their neighborhood.
- 4) Obtaining neighborhood Watch signs to post in your neighborhood as well as window decals. Criminals know that if a neighborhood has a Neighborhood Watch sign posted, the neighborhood is not an easy target. It is a notice that the neighborhood is organized and does not tolerate criminal activity in the area. The sign is proof that your neighborhood has safeguards in place to detect crime and report suspicious activity to the police.
- 5) Knowing your neighbors. Neighborhood Watch promotes getting to know your neighbors and their patterns. You will learn to be aware of activity that does not fit with regular schedules. This means that when you are away, you can feel more secure about your property.
- 6) Reducing the fear of crime and making your neighborhood more livable. Neighborhood Watch increases the number of arrests and convictions by serving as a conduit between law enforcements and the community.
- 7) Allowing other areas of concern to be addressed. Neighborhood watch participants can address other issues that concern their neighborhood or community. Examples could be fire prevention and/or child safety.

How much work is involved in Neighborhood Watch?

That depends on your neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have significant areas of concerns that need to be addressed. Other neighborhoods might want to simply maintain their area and do not need to devote a great deal of time to the program. Your limitations are those that you set for yourself.



What are the responsibilities of the Neighborhood Watch Captain?

The role of the Neighborhood Watch Captain is to serve as the coordinator and liaison for the Neighborhood Watch Group. It is up to the Captain to coordinate and delegate the responsibilities of their group.

- 1) Maintain an updated list of all member names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers

- 2) Set up a communication network for your area. This might include creating a phone tree, neighborhood map, group email list. MLPD can help you set up your network.
- 3) Distribute information to your neighborhood, which will be sent to you by Moses Lake Police Department or information from fellow group members.
- 4) Provide sign in sheets for attendees to sign in at your Neighborhood Watch function and hold for your records.
- 5) Set up a working committee of Co-Captains to assist with your neighborhood activities and to help you get information out to your group.
- 6) Greet new neighbors that move into the neighborhood. Encourage them to get involved and be included in the contact list.
*sample of letter attached. Can get this personalized with MLPD
- 7) Should you decided to discontinue serving as a Captain, please let MLPD know so another captain can be chosen.



What are the ideal characteristics of Neighborhood Watch Captains?

- 1) Outgoing personality that truly cares about people
- 2) Sincere desire to better the neighborhood
- 3) Live in the neighborhood where they are captain
- 4) Do not have a criminal record
- 5) Organized and detail oriented
- 6) Creative and willing to try new things
- 7) Excellent communication skills

What are the responsibilities of Neighborhood Watch Members?

- 1) Learn neighbors names and be able to recognize them and their vehicles.
- 2) Keep a copy of the neighborhood telephone tree and neighborhood map in an easily accessible place
- 3) Attend meetings
- 4) Be alert to unusual or suspicious behavior in your neighborhood, utilize your phone tree and inform your Neighborhood Watch Captain. Call the police department EMERGENCY 911 – Non Emergency 509-762-1160

- 5) Do NOT take any risks to prevent a crime or try to make an arrest. Remember your job is to REPORT crime. Apprehending criminals is the responsibility of the professionals at the Police Department.
- 6) Display Neighborhood Watch window decals in prominent place at your home.
- 7) Watch your neighbors' homes when they are away. Ask them to return the favor. This includes picking up mail/newspapers and putting back garbage cans if left out. Do not leave signals that say "no one is home"
- 8) Be involved. It is the most effective way to reduce/prevent crime and make your neighborhood safe.

Communication with your Neighborhood Watch Members

There are a few ways that information can be relayed to all members of the group in case of an emergency or to inform neighbors of suspicious activity. As a group, you can decide which method works best for you. Groups may choose to use these as communication methods:

- 1) Facebook Group
- 2) Email
- 3) Phone Tree
- 4) Text Messages

The Captain is in charge of forwarding the information to all members. However, if you choose to great a facebook group, everyone in the program will have access to relay information. When the Captain receives information from a member, they begin the process such as sending emails, or making the first calls on the phone trees, etc. Again, Moses Lake Police Department can help you develop these methods which will work best for you.

Facebook Group

Facebook is a great social networking tool but can also be used as a method for relaying information to all members very quickly. A group will need to be made and all members can be added. Anyone can post information on the group page and it will notify everyone that is a member



of the group. This is a quick and easy way to reach a lot of people quickly. Also, this allows all members to pass on information rather than leaving it in the hands of just the Captain.

Email

The Captain/Co-Captains creates a email list with all members email addresses. When information needs to be put out to all members, they will create an email and send it to everyone on the list.

*Example of Email attached

Phone Tree

A phone tree is a tool that allows you to communicate with each member of your neighborhood watch in an efficient manner. Each person is designated to call one or two names until all homes have been notified.

*Example of Phone Tree Attached

Text Messages

Another quick method of relaying important information to an entire group could be sending out a mass text message to the neighborhood watch members.



What is a Neighborhood Watch map?

a map that is designed to denote the precise location of each individual on your streets. It should include home addresses, names of the occupants, telephone numbers and directional compass. These maps should be kept in safe place that is easily accessible for all family members. Sharing personal information is

voluntary. If someone chooses to not share personal information, they may still be a part of Neighborhood. If you need help with this process please feel free to contact MLPD.

*Example of Map attached

Neighborhood Watch Meetings

Meetings should be held at least once a year. A good reason to call a meeting is when there are more crimes happening in your neighborhood at that current time.

*Example of meeting letter attached

Additional Available Information

- NCPC.org/neighborhood-watch

