



Neighborhood Watch Start Up Guide

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Getting Started

Phase One: Getting Started -- Meetings, Block Captains, and Maps

- Define the neighborhood area you want to start with. Start small; you can always add homes later.
- Reach out to your neighbors to let them know about Neighborhood Watch and you are interested starting a watch group. If they don't understand what Neighborhood Watch is, use the flyer included at the end of this guide (*Reasons & Benefits of Neighborhood Watch*)
- Set up a date and time for the initial meeting. Get their contact information.
- Contact the Roseville Police Department Community Services Division (916-774-5050) and inform them of the meeting. You can request local crime stats or other crime prevention data for your neighborhood and invite a neighborhood officer to attend your meeting.
- Publicize your meeting at least one week in advance with door-to-door fliers and follow up with phone calls/text messages the day before.
- Select a meeting place that is accessible to people with disabilities if needed. This could be someone's home, a local café or park, a community use room at a nearby public or private business, or the police department.
- At the initial meeting, gauge neighbors' interest; establish purpose of program; and begin to identify issues that need to be addressed. Stress that a Watch group is an association of neighbors who look out for each other's families and property, alert the police to any suspicious activities or crime in progress, and work together to make their community a safer and better place to live.

Phase Two: When the neighborhood decides to adopt the Watch idea, elect a chairperson.

- Ask for block captain volunteers who are responsible for relaying information to members on their block, keeping up-to-date information on residents, and making special efforts to involve the elderly, working parents, and young people. Block captains also can serve as liaisons between the neighborhood and the police and communicate information about meetings and crime incidents to all residents.
- Establish a regular means of communicating with Watch members—e.g., newsletter, telephone tree, e-mail, text message, etc.
- Prepare a neighborhood map showing names, addresses, and phone numbers of participating households and distribute to members. Block captains keep this map up to date, contacting newcomers to the neighborhood and rechecking occasionally with ongoing participants. (There is a downloadable/printable home map on the Roseville Police Neighborhood Watch webpage)

- Register your new group with the Roseville Police Department (there is a registration form available on the Police Department website)
- With guidance from the Roseville Police, the Watch group trains its members in home security techniques, observation skills, and crime reporting. Residents also learn about the types of crime that affect the area.
- If you are ready to post Neighborhood Watch signs, the classic “Boris the Burglar” signs can be ordered from National Neighborhood Watch Institute (www.nnwi.org). Members of RCONA (Roseville Coalition of Neighborhood Associations) can get a discount if they order signs through RCONA. The City of Roseville will install the signs for your Watch group.
- Organizers and block captains must emphasize that Watch groups are not vigilantes and do not assume the role of the police. They only ask neighbors to be alert, observant, and caring—and to report suspicious activity or crimes immediately to the police.

Tips for Success

- Hold regular meetings to help residents get to know each other and to collectively decide upon program strategies and activities.
- Canvas door-to-door to recruit new Watch members.
- Involve everyone -- young and old, single and married, renter and homeowner.
- Maintain communication with the Roseville Police Department and request information from them as needed.
- Get the information out quickly. Share all kinds of news -- quash rumors.
- Gather the facts about crime in your neighborhood. Check police reports, do victimization surveys, and learn residents' perceptions about crime. Often residents' opinions are not supported by facts, and accurate information can reduce fear of crime.
- Physical conditions like abandoned cars or overgrown vacant lots contribute to crime. Sponsor cleanups, encourage residents to beautify the area, and ask them to turn on outdoor lights at night.
- It's essential to celebrate the success of the effort and recognize volunteers' contributions through such events as awards, annual dinners, and parties. To help meet community needs, Neighborhood Watches can sponsor meetings that address broader issues such as drug abuse, gangs, self-protection tactics, isolation of the elderly, crime in the schools, and rape prevention. The Roseville Police can provide speakers on these specific topics for the meetings.
- Don't forget events like National Night Out or a potluck dinner that gives neighbors a chance to get together.

Information included in this Guide:

- Introduction Letter Sample
- Initial Meeting Invitation Sample
- First meeting Checklist
- First meeting sample agenda
- NW Meeting Sign In Sheet
- Block Captain & Team Member Responsibilities
- Block Captain Registration Form
- Neighborhood Watch Meeting Topics
- Reasons For Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch Introduction Letter Example

When you go out to contact your neighbors, a letter/flier like this can be left at the door of those who are not home.

Dear Neighbor,

A group of your neighbors is interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch group. We are currently gathering issues and concerns from each neighbor, exchanging contact information, and planning for our first Neighborhood Watch meeting. This is an invitation to you to become a member of our Neighborhood Watch group.

All of your neighbors are concerned about becoming the victim of a crime, but none of us can fight crime alone. We need your help in making our neighborhood stronger and safer. An alert and unified neighborhood is the best defense against crime.

Please email or call me at _____ to express any neighborhood concern, and to exchange contact information.

I will be contacting you in the near future to let you know when and where the meeting will take place.

Sincerely,

Block Captain's Name

Block Captain's Name

Note: This is only a suggestion, feel free to modify as needed.

Initial NW Meeting Invitation Sample Wording

You're invited to our first Neighborhood Watch Group Meeting!

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

All neighbors are invited to become members of the Watch group.

In joining Neighborhood Watch, you will learn more about:

- Uniting our community in a common goal
- Reducing fear of crime in our neighborhood
- Recognizing suspicious activity and reporting it
- Making our neighborhood more crime-resistant
- Protecting your property value
- Improving problem solving as a group

Note that some crime discussions may be inappropriate for children

Neighborhood Watch is encouraged and supported by the Roseville Police Department

Start Up/Initial Meeting Checklist

- Date and time set up (allow extra time at beginning and end for socializing)
- Nametags for attendees to fill out
- Seating available in an area where everyone can see and hear each other
- Refreshments
- Attendance Sheet
- Agenda
- Handouts printed out and ready (The Roseville Police Department Community Services Division has many informational handouts including Neighborhood Watch Tri-fold, Witnessing and Reporting a Crime info sheet, Know Your Neighbors fillable map, No Soliciting sign, and others.)
- Have a note-taker to record issues/concerns brought up in the meeting

During the meeting:

Begin and end on time

Set ground rules, such as time allowed for speaking and adhering to the agenda

Have someone take notes/minutes

After your meeting:

Any community concerns brought up can be communicated to the Police Department Neighborhood Watch liaison and/or your Neighborhood Officer.

Distribute the meeting minutes/notes, especially for those who could not make it

Follow up with those who could not make it to see if they have any questions about anything discussed

Start Up Meeting Agenda Example

Anystreet Neighborhood Meeting Agenda

Location: 123 Anystreet (The Carter's)

Date: May 15th, 2021

Time: 7PM-8PM-ish

Agenda details:

- I. Meet Your Neighbors!
 - a. Fill out a nametag
 - b. Snacks
 - c. Sign Attendance Sheet
 - d. Start filling out "Know Your Neighbors" Info Sheet

- II. Welcome to the first Anystreet Neighborhood Watch Meeting
 - a. Round Robin Introductions
 - b. Announcements by Amy Carter
 - c. Introduction of Neighborhood Officer or PD representative (if present)

- III. Neighborhood Watch Presentation
 - a. Review of NW Trifold – all about NW
 - b. Other handouts
 - c. Role and Responsibility of Block Captain and members
 1. Volunteers for Block Captain or Co-Block Captain?
 - d. What are the neighborhood concerns? (Volunteer to take notes)

- IV. Conclusion
 - a. Upcoming neighborhood and community events
 - b. Schedule next meeting
 - c. Close meeting – make sure all Know Your Neighbors sheets filled out



Neighborhood Watch Meeting

Sign In Sheet

Meeting Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____ ZIP: _____

Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email
Name	Address
Phone	Email

Neighborhood Watch Organization

There is no single right way to organize a Neighborhood Watch group. Traditionally, a Watch group will include a law enforcement officer or liaison (usually the neighborhood officer), an area coordinator who lives in the community, block captains spread throughout the community, and watch members. If your group is starting small, you may only have a Captain and members; but that could change as your Watch group grows.

The Neighborhood Watch Coordinator's job is crucial to the success of your program. This job is typically filled by a retiree or other individual who has extra time at home. This person's responsibilities include:

- Expanding the program and maintaining a current list of participants and neighborhood residents, including names, addresses, home and work telephone numbers, email addresses, and vehicle descriptions.
- Acting as a liaison between Watch members, officers, civic groups, and block captains
- Arranging neighborhood crime prevention training programs
- Obtaining and distributing crime prevention materials (e.g. fliers and signs)

Block Captains are recommended for every 10-15 houses. Their responsibilities include:

- Acting as liaison between block residents and the coordinator
- Obtaining address and contact information for all group members and establishing a communication link
- Visiting and inviting new residents to join; notifying them of meetings
- Staying in touch with all group members to discuss possibly crime problems, needs for assistance, and suggestions for program improvement.
- Scheduling Watch meetings as often as the group thinks necessary

Watch Members are the heart of Neighborhood Watch.

- Be alert to suspicious activity in the neighborhood and report it to the police immediately
- Get to know your neighbors; learn to identify anyone who does not belong in the neighborhood
- Follow safety and security guidelines in and around your home including window and door locks, lighting, and landscape maintenance.
- Attend Neighborhood Watch meetings
- Communicate with your neighbors about safety and security concerns



Roseville Police Department Neighborhood Watch Registration Form

Registering your Neighborhood Watch group with the Roseville Police Dept helps us keep you current with crime prevention news, community safety events and updates.

Date: _____

Traditional Neighborhood Watch Virtual Neighborhood Watch Hybrid

Neighborhood Watch Street / Group Name: _____

Block Captain Information

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Is phone # a cell? Yes No

What is the best way to contact you? Cell phone Text Message Email

Block Co Captain Information N/A

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Is phone # a cell? Yes No

What is the best way to contact you? Cell phone Text Message Email

Is your Neighborhood Watch group affiliated with a Neighborhood Association? Yes No

If yes, which Neighborhood Association? _____

What addresses are part of your Neighborhood Watch group?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 16. _____ |

Print and mail this form to Roseville Community Services-1051 Junction Bl, Roseville CA 95678;

Or save the form and e-mail to: PDCommunityServices@Roseville.ca.us

A fillable PDF form is available on the Roseville Police Department Community Service Division web page.

Neighborhood Watch Meeting Topic Ideas

These are just some suggestions for topics that can be discussed in Neighborhood Watch meetings. The police department can provide speakers for a majority of them, or get you in touch with someone who can make a presentation for others:

Personal Safety	Social Services Unit
Child/Stranger Safety	Traffic
Home Security	UAS (Drones)
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	Human Trafficking
First Aid/CPR	Police Dispatch/Calling 9-1-1
Animal Control	Crime Scene Investigation
Dogs-What to do if attacked	Detectives/Investigations
Scams	Arson Investigations
Internet Crimes/Cyber Security	Hazardous Materials
ID Theft	Train Safety
Parent to Parent	City Council Representative
Landlord/Tenant Issues	Placer County District Attorney
Cultural Awareness/Diversity Training	Defensive Driving
Restorative Justice	Neighborhood Watch 'patrol'
Peer Courts	Terrorism Awareness
School Resource Officers	Teen Vehicle Safety
Community Policing	Juvenile Crime Prevention
Emergency Preparedness	Conflict Resolution
Search & Rescue	Local Fire Station Tour
Active Shooter	Domestic Violence
Crime Prevention	Red Cross
Senior Safety	Sexual Assault Services
K9 Officers	Mediation Services
Patrol Officer functions	Parole & Probation
Transient/Homeless issues	Sex Offenders
SWAT	Gang Awareness
	Drug/Narcotic Awareness

Reasons for Neighborhood Watch & Benefits of Neighborhood Watch

Reasons for Neighborhood Watch

Basic Crime Prevention

Practice crime safety measures that eliminate opportunities for criminals. Encourage others to join in crime prevention efforts. Aid others when they become victims of crime. Work for a better and safer neighborhood through protecting and honoring the rights of others.

Disaster Preparedness

Learn skills to prepare for man-made and natural disasters. Local, state, and the federal government do a lot to prepare for disasters but citizens have to be ready to care for each other. Encourage citizen involvement in preparation and planning.

Build A Stronger Community

Get to know your neighbors. In our fast-paced world we don't spend enough time learning about our neighbors. Watch groups give community members a reason to get together and talk about making their community a better place. Neighborhood Watch activities are a fun way for community members to get to know each other while making a difference.



Benefits

Communities actively utilizing Neighborhood Watch have experienced:

- Reduction in crime
- Better quality of life
- Greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control
- Building of community pride and unity
- Preparing for helping others and ourselves in our community
- Providing law enforcement agencies with volunteer support year-round
- Becoming the extra "eyes and ears" of law enforcement personnel to enhance public safety
- Better relationships with law enforcement



Other tools available for your Neighborhood Watch group

The following documents/forms/handouts are available on the Police Department website as printable documents or can be provided to you for your meeting:

- Guide for witnessing and reporting a crime to the police
- Neighborhood Watch Registration form (fillable PDF)
- No Soliciting printable door sign
- Neighborhood Watch informational trifold flier
- Virtual Neighborhood Watch Start Up Guide
- Personal Safety flier
- RCONA Information
- Home Security Checklist
- Special Event / Speaker Request
- Keep Watch Surveillance Camera Registry
- Crime Prevention Tips
- Home Inventory Identification Record

Call Community Services at 916-774-5050 to request any of the above items.

My Neighborhood Officer Lookup

The police department website also has a “Find My Neighborhood Officer” interactive map on our website that will tell you which RCONA Neighborhood Association your address is located in and which police beat your address is in. It also has a link to email your neighborhood officer about neighborhood issues.