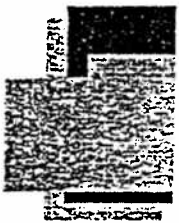




NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

# Help!!

**I want to start a  
Crime Watch Program  
in my Neighborhood**



*Neighborhood Alliance* INC.

Serving Central Oklahoma's Neighborhoods for over 25 years!!



# MEMORANDUM

Dear Neighborhood Resident,

On behalf of the City of Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma City Police Department, we want to thank you for your interest in the Neighborhood Watch Program. Citizen interest, support and involvement is the best tool available in battling crime in the residential community.

A watch program is normally formed as a re-active measure to crime problems that have already occurred, rather than a pro-active or preventive effort. In 75% of neighborhood areas that start an active Neighborhood Watch, crime is immediately reduced, many times by 90%! Unfortunately, once the initial problem is solved, member interest dwindles and the neighborhood returns to become an "easy mark" for future crime. Lack of citizen interest, until they become a victim, creates the only negative image of a Watch Program. For that reason alone, continued interest is a **MUST!**

Our Department's main concern is citizen safety. We want to educate your membership to be more and better aware of **WHAT**, **WHEN** and **HOW** crime is occurring in your neighborhood. Creating additional "eyes and ears" for the Police Officers in your area, will allow us to do our job without **YOU** or your neighbor's safety and security being in jeopardy.

While Police manpower and time available is at a premium, we encourage your involvement, your patience and your help in starting a Neighborhood Watch. This program, working in concert with the Officer on duty in your area, can certainly strengthen a residential community against crime!

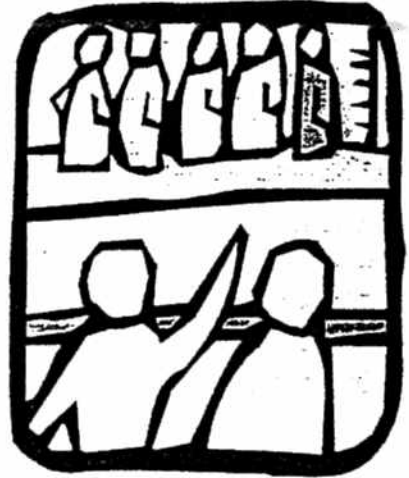
Again we appreciate your interest and your efforts. We, like you, hope for and will work for a successful program!

## YOUR FIRST MEETING

### BASIC ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Open the meeting with a few remarks about possible goals and objectives. Try and set an informal tone. Encourage participation from everyone. Stress the need that for the association to work, it must be active!

If a Neighborhood Alliance, Inc. is present, they can assist in the major portion of your meeting, assisting with the election of officers or, the appointment of interim officers until more members can be present to hold an election.



### WHAT NEXT?

Each association is encouraged to have a set of formal by-laws and set up a dues structure for expenses of the group. Dues are NOT required, however, a yearly fee from each member household usually pays for WATCH signs or residential anti-crime stickers. A sample set of by-laws is included in this packet.

### ESTABLISH:

- MEMBERSHIP – what are the boundaries of your WATCH group.
- DUES – amount and frequency to be paid.
- NAME BLOCK CAPTAINS IF, your group is large enough. Usually one person per block should be elected or appointed to coordinate the activities of that block. They also greet and inform new neighbors.

Block Captains should gather information on every house in that block. Name, address, phone, owner if rented, type of cars and license numbers.

Each member in that block should receive a copy, even Captains on adjoining blocks.

Captains should be notified when trips, vacations, etc. are planned so unattended houses may be checked. A Co-Captain should be appointed to assist when the Captain is gone.

Captains should encourage that any and all crimes be reported to police and be advised of any suspicious activity in the area.

Communication is most important in a Watch Group. If you see someone prowling or just acting suspicious, advise the Captain or neighbor next door so they too, can be aware and WATCH that person's activity. It might prevent a crime!

## Neighborhood

### When All The Citizens Help

A Neighborhood Watch Association is a program in which residents from neighboring blocks communicate and coordinate security measures fitting their collective need. Simply stated, it involves neighbors watching out for their neighbors in an effort to deter and reduce the level of criminal activity in the neighborhood.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE IN A COMMUNITY GET TOGETHER?

When you organize a Watch program, your new association can

- Create a sense of pride in your neighborhood as you get to know each other and really around a community project or program
- Initiate a wide variety of neighborhood improvement projects. See, first hand, things really change in your neighborhood
- Improve City Services! Bring attention to items that require involvement from City Government.
- Lay the framework for a new system of neighborhood government where each individual has a greater control and impact on his/her environment and quality of life.

### HOW TO GET STARTED?

You can begin your watch association with a few interested people who really care about the neighborhood and want to improve it. The first steps to organizing are:

- Personally contact the homeowners or residents on your block. Solicit their interest and assistance in contacting other residents.
- Contact Neighborhood Alliance, Inc. for initial information and additional Watch materials. Schedule a meeting with a Neighborhood Alliance, Inc. volunteer, if available or, set a meeting with all interested residents.
- Compile a master list of those residents contacted, then advise them when the first meeting will be and urge their attendance.



## SIGNING

## (HOMES, YARDS AND NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRY)

Many local traffic control companies have Neighborhood Watch signs already made up and for sale to the general PUBLIC. The purchase price of these signs are the responsibility of the Association if, they elect to install them.

### NOTE:

Any street signs erected must be approved by the City of Oklahoma City, Code Enforcement Division. Placement of signs on City easement or the private property of the homeowner (near the curb) requires a permit. Applications for a permit may be obtained from PERMITS, third floor, CITY HALL.

## HELPFUL HINTS

Meetings should be as informative as possible, interesting and not too long. It tends to signal the criminal element that houses are unoccupied and all area residents are at a meeting. Try and choose a comfortable place within or near your neighborhood. Local schools, churches, community centers or parks, weather permitting, all make good locations. Publicize your meetings via the phone or personal contact. DO NOT leave fliers in doors, mailboxes, etc., again, you may be telling a potential lawbreaker.

Give at least a weeks notice to your meetings. General meetings usually require more "lead" time. Meetings with just your block members can be more informal.

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Invite quests to attend your general meetings from time to time. DO NOT schedule to many speakers at one time ESPECIALLY, on those evenings when you have Police Officers present. Field Officers may be restricted on time and may be called back to "service" should his Unit be required. In addition, the Officers from the Public Affairs Unit normally need the entire time available to discuss problems, new crime techniques, investigations, etc. Therefore, please attempt to allow officers the opportunity to assist your Watch group free of other non-City speakers.

Other speakers you may want to seek out could be; City Leaders, zoning commissioners, housing experts, security professionals and the Fire Department.

## FUNDRAISING

Fund Raising activities for your Association can be a number of things. Membership Drives, donations from residents or local businesses. Block parties, cake walks, garage sales, etc. are not only fun, but, profitable.

## WHEN DO WE GET TO TALK TO A POLICE OFFICER?

ANYTIME YOU WANT! Actually, we want to talk to all the Watch Groups from time to time. We encourage you to FIRST, form your association, complete your administrative duties of electing officers, etc., and have a meeting or two prior to inviting us out for a presentation. This allows the group to focus on specific problems in the neighborhood report those concerns to us. We, in turn, can respond to your needs based on a review of actual "crime stats", patrol procedures and manning capabilities to better answer your concerns. Meeting first then, inviting our Officers to participate, will allow you to better know how we can help and what to ask.

## WHO IS "US" AND WHO IS "WE"??

The Office of Public Affairs, attached to the Administrative Bureau, is charged with numerous duties among them being, Crime Prevention and Police Community Relations. These two sections are involved in Neighborhood Watch. Officers representing that Unit usually make the initial contacts with newly formed Watch groups. We request that prior to requesting the Public Affairs Officers to your meeting, every attempt to allow at least two weeks notice be made. We will make every effort to accommodate your request. Normal office hours are 8am to 4pm weekdays however; at least one officer is scheduled to work evenings each week. We will attend evening meeting requests. With proper notice, we usually have no trouble scheduling evening Watch meetings. From that point on, we would like to be invited back at least once each year. In addition, we want to assist each group in meeting the Field Officers assigned to their area. That includes both Command Officers and Patrol Officers. While they may or many not occur at the same time, we view it extremely important for your group to have a visit from the Oklahoma City Police Department, at least once, every six months.

There are only a few times each year we find it difficult to promise attendance. The three weeks surrounding the State Fair and the last 60 days of the school year do pose a scheduling problem.

On occasion we will request your group's involvement for a "special" function. During September of each year, we join with hundreds of others cities across America in recognizing NATIONAL NIGHT OUT. It is a one night, one-hour effort when Watch groups "take back the streets from crime." During the program, our Department attempts to visit every active Watch group throughout the City that is participating in the unique crime prevention effort. During National Crime Prevention Week, we often try and produce special programs that selected Watch groups are encouraged to take part in. With those few exceptions, we make every effort to assist Watch groups when called upon.

It is that PACT, Police And Citizens Together that make the Neighborhood Watch Program such a success.

## HELP IS AVAILABLE!

- The NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE, INC. is a support group, which works county-wide to help neighborhoods form smaller, individual communities that work together to "help themselves." One of the major concerns of Neighborhood Alliance is the provision of assistance that will make neighborhoods safer through active WATCH programs and communicative newsletters.

Neighborhood Alliance is a nonprofit organization that is funded through private donations. Staffing is provided on a mostly volunteer basis.

Your contact with Neighborhood Alliance is encouraged. They can provide basic information on starting a Neighborhood Watch Program, as well as other information, which may be vital to a Neighborhood Association. They will assist you with formation of a Watch program by attending your first meeting and providing local crime statistics for your area.

Membership in Neighborhood Alliance currently includes your group's access to weekly crime reports (burglaries, stolen autos, sex offenses), which can be most helpful to the new Watch group in identifying neighborhood problems. It can also be of assistance to Watch leaders in generating interest of residents toward becoming more involved in neighborhood activity.

Neighborhood Alliance serves as a central registration location for Watch group membership, officer rosters, by-laws, and meeting agendas. Your group can also receive mail-out information about other Watch groups, new crime prevention techniques, and new items available for the purposes of enhancing personal and property safety. Much of the assistance offered by Neighborhood Alliance will help in the administrative formation of your new Watch group. This includes your initial meeting, election of officers, and proper by-law wording.

Following completion of the administrative process and one or two "beginner" meetings, it is recommended that you invite the local police department to attend a future meeting. A police officer can respond to the unique situations of crime in your area and help work to resolve the various crime problems, be it burglary, vandalism or prowling. If you need general training in home or personal crime prevention techniques, they can be of assistance. The officers will make every effort to assist you in finding a positive resolution to particular crime problems in your neighborhood.

Remember, most of the Neighborhood Alliance help is voluntary but, they are available to you and will be happy to assist you as often as possible and for whatever need. Neighborhood Alliance is located at 1236 NW 36<sup>th</sup> Street in Oklahoma City (the southeast corner of NW 36<sup>th</sup> and Classen Boulevard). The phone number is 528-6322.

## ELEMENTS OF WATCH PROGRAM

### 1. KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

- a. Who is home and when.
- b. How many cars and license numbers
- c. Phone numbers - home and work.
- d. Notify your neighbors when you are having work done and no one is home.
- e. Notify your neighbors of any deliveries expected.
- f. Notify your neighbors of anyone caring for your home while you are away.

### 2. WATCH FOR UNUSUAL ACTIVITIES

- a. Visitors when residents are known to be gone.
- b. Non-resident autos parked in neighborhood.
- c. Anyone carrying objects away from a home.

### 3. REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES

- a. Call neighbors home or work number and tell them what you see. If it is suspicious and neighbor is gone - Call the Police
- b. Give accurate report to dispatcher, address and directions to area.
- c. Do not investigate any suspicious activities yourself; your neighbor's property is not worth injury!
- d. Notify neighborhood block captains of suspicious automobiles or persons entering their area from yours.





## FUNCTIONS OF OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT** - Presides at meetings and is generally responsible for seeing that the goals and purposes of the association are carried out.

**VICE PRESIDENT** - The assistant to the president who also serves in the president's absence.

**SECRETARY** - The officer who keeps minutes of the meetings and records all votes and decisions.

**TREASURER** - The officer who keeps financial records, manages the association's bank account, and presents regular reports at meetings.

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:** Persons appointed by the president or elected by the group for specific program areas such as security, health, sanitation, meeting arrangements, or special events. A Block Captain would be the logical chairperson for the association's security committee.

**SECTION COORDINATORS:** Depending on the size and area of the association, the president may want to appoint Section Coordinators to act as liaison between the Executive Committee and Block Captains.

- The Section Coordinators should have a map of the entire section, divided into individual blocks.
- Should receive or help coordinate with a list of all persons who may be block captains.
- May be designated to appoint the block captains in his/her section.
- Request block captains give him/her a monthly report of any known crime activity.
- Provides information to each block captain:
  - a. Map of his block and surrounding area.
  - b. Forms for gathering of needed information.
  - c. Additional police department brochures.
- Coordinates and conducts individual block meetings.
- Any other duties as assigned by the president or general membership.

## SAMPLE WATCH ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

The by-laws are the rules of your Neighborhood Watch Association designed to give your organization permanence and structure. Parts can be changed for your special purposes. Remember that written by-laws are required for participation in the city's watch program. All-important questions, especially those involving money, should be discussed and approved by the majority of association members attending an open meeting.

NAME: The name of this association shall be \_\_\_\_\_.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the association shall be to promote a better community through group action (with specific goals as the members may set.)

MEMBERSHIP: Any persons residing within the area bounded by \_\_\_\_\_ on the north, \_\_\_\_\_ on the south, \_\_\_\_\_ on the east, and \_\_\_\_\_ on the west.

DUES: Annual dues shall be \_\_\_\_\_ and shall be renewable each \_\_\_\_\_.

OFFICERS: The officers shall be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. They shall be elected by the entire membership in \_\_\_\_\_ (semi-annually or each year.)

COMMITTEES: The majority of members in any meeting may set up committees to deal with continuing problem areas or for specific purposes. (Said committees may be appointed by the President or elected by the group).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The officers and chairpersons of standing committees shall become the executive committee. This committee will call special meetings, take action between meetings as instructed by the membership, and deal with emergency problems.

MEETINGS: Meetings shall be held on a regular basis and at a time and place of convenience to the largest number of members. Meetings shall be called and members notified at least one week in advance.

QUORUM: At least 20% of the membership must be present to conduct official business. A majority of members present can approve any action.

AMENDMENTS: The by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting. Members must be notified one week in advance of the proposed amendment and two-thirds of those present and voting must approve the change.

## Suspicious Activity Report

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Physical Description:

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_

Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Complexion \_\_\_\_\_

Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Glasses \_\_\_\_\_

### Vehicle Description:

Color \_\_\_\_\_ Make \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Tag \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Markings \_\_\_\_\_

Direction of travel \_\_\_\_\_

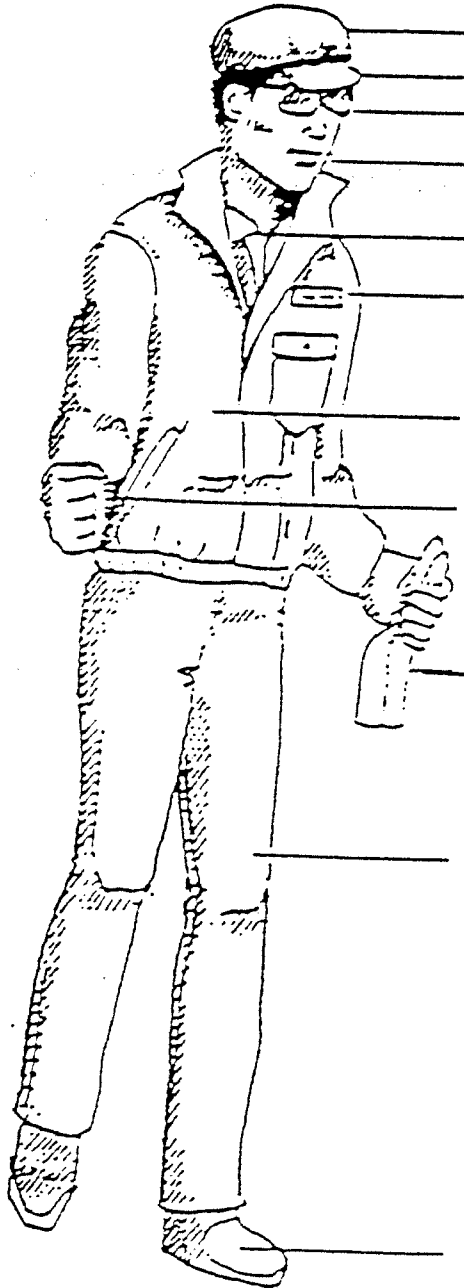
### Remarks:

Describe unusual  
behavior, speech,  
action, Etc.

Reported By: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



Hat

Hair

Teeth

Shirt

Uniform

Name Tag

Jacket

Jewelry

Where they carrying  
anything?

Trousers

Shoes

## NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE WATCH PROGRAM

### HOW IT WORKS

Each resident should display one Neighborhood Watch Sticker on the front door or windows of your house where it can be seen from the street. We also recommend one sticker on the back door and both sides of your house. You may also want to put one on the bumper of your car(s).

Burglars most frequently try a door and next an unlocked window. Usually the sticker on the door will give the burglar a moment's pause while they wonder if a neighbor IS watching them at that very moment, calling the police. They might just wonder enough to go to a neighborhood where no stickers are visible.

The stickers are effective when as many neighbors as possible participate in the program and really watch each other's homes. Burglars won't be fooled for long if you aren't really watching out for your neighbors. Volunteer to exchange information with your neighbors. Record the information on the block watch map and keep it by your phone so you can call and check if you see something suspicious around their homes. Ask them to really watch your home and report to the police any suspicious persons or activities around your house. REMEMBER, GOOD NEIGHBORS MAKE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS.

### WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Strangers repeatedly circling your block, especially Pick-ups, vans, trucks, etc.
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates, clothing, gas from a car.
- Strangers suspiciously leaving one car and driving off in another.
- A car stopping to pick up someone along the street who looks like he or she doesn't want to go, especially young children.
- Anyone loitering in the area, walking between and around neighbors' houses.
- Stranger(s) entering neighbor's house.
- Persons who look unusual to the neighborhood and appear nervous or glancing around as if concerned about who sees them.
- Persons peering into windows and trying them.
- Sounds: barking dogs, breaking glass, etc.
- Strangers carrying household articles, appliances, luggage, etc. from neighbor's house (especially TV's, computers, stereos, etc.).
- Loud Shouting as from a street brawl or groups of teenagers showing weapons or preparing to fight.
- Screaming or calling for help.
- Loud explosion or gunshots.

Over, Please ➤

Write on a note pad

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

What features does **ONLY** this person have? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (scars, marks, tattoos, unusual facial features) \_\_\_\_\_

**SEX** \_\_\_\_\_ **RACE** \_\_\_\_\_ **HEIGHT** \_\_\_\_\_ **WEIGHT** \_\_\_\_\_

**HAIR COLOR** \_\_\_\_\_ **HAIR LENGTH** \_\_\_\_\_ **BEARD?** \_\_\_\_\_

**EYE COLOR** \_\_\_\_\_ **EYEGLASSES** \_\_\_\_\_ **CLOTHES** \_\_\_\_\_

**MANNERISMS** \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Alert, normal, droopy, etc.)

Which way did they go? \_\_\_\_\_

### VEHICLE DESCRIPTION

What does **ONLY** this car have \_\_\_\_\_  
 (License #, dents, scratches, missing lights, mismatched doors or fenders, etc.)

**COLOR: TOP** \_\_\_\_\_ **BOTTOM** \_\_\_\_\_

**STYLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Coupe, sedan station wagon, pick-up, van truck, SUV, etc.

**MODEL** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEAR** \_\_\_\_\_

(Sketch front grill or tail lights)

Which way did they go? \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUR OWN HOME

If you see signs your house was broken into while you were gone:

DO NOT ENTER YOUR HOUSE

Go to a neighbor's house and call the POLICE

If you hear someone trying to enter your home while you are there, CALL POLICE immediately and follow their instructions.

### DON'T

- Don't pin notes on doors telling friends when you will be back.
- Don't spread it around if you are a woman living alone.
- Don't give your whole key ring to service stations and parking lot attendants. Give only the car key and don't put your name or address on the keys.
- Don't leave your doors unlocked even for short trips to your back yard. (Many petty larcenies are committed by youths looking for such an opportunity.)
- Don't plant trees that hide doors and windows.

### DO

- Do call police if suspicious of a vehicle or person (let police decide if a crime was committed).
- Do keep your porch light on at night (if not near a street light). It cost less than a nickel to burn a 100-watt bulb all night and it will light your whole front yard.
- Do draw your blinds at night to prevent strangers from watching you.
- Do change your locks if you lose your keys.
- Do make your house look occupied when you are away. By day, leave drapes and shades in a normal position. At night, leave on some inner lights in bathroom or hallway.
- Do trim your shrubs down even with your windowsills so there is no hiding place for a burglar while trying to pry your windows.
- Do join OPERATION I.D. It has effectively reduced burglary wherever it has been properly used.

## WHEN YOU GO AWAY

- Notify your neighbors if you will be away, especially if a repairman may be coming.
- When on vacation, don't advertise you're gone: ask a neighbor to help. Leave a key with them, change your timer and drapes occasionally and also keep papers and advertisements from your porch and yard.

# Suspicious Activity Report

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

## Physical Description:

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_

Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Complexion \_\_\_\_\_

Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Glasses \_\_\_\_\_

## Vehicle Description:

Color \_\_\_\_\_ Make \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Tag \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Markings \_\_\_\_\_

Direction of travel \_\_\_\_\_

## Remarks:

Describe unusual  
behavior, speech,  
action, Etc.

Reported By: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



Hat

Hair

Teeth

Shirt

Uniform

Name Tag

Jacket

Jewelry

Where they carrying  
anything?

Trousers

Shoes