

First meeting. The first meeting is critical in forming of a group. All attendees should introduce themselves and sign a sheet with their names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses so they can be contacted about future meetings and activities. They should be assured that their personal information will not be given to anyone without their permission. The Watch Commander or other SPD representative will talk about the topics listed above and answer questions. Then the group should define the area to be covered and select a Block Captain or Co-Captains.

The area covered by a group in a neighborhood with single-family homes can range from several homes on one side of a street to several blocks with homes on both sides of the streets. The area can also include neighborhood parks, canyons, etc. The area covered in a neighborhood with apartment complexes can range from a single complex to several complexes. The area need not be an entire block. Or it could include several blocks.

The initial duties of the Block Captain or Co-Captains are listed below:

- Compile a membership list
- Develop an area map with home addresses
- Collect money for Neighborhood Watch signs, and post and maintain the signs

Neighborhood Watch groups are free to buy signs from any company and do not need SPD authorization to do so. The signs can be installed with permission on private property or utility poles, with perforated metal tape on City street light poles, or at least 7 feet above the grade level on City street signs. They cannot be installed on any traffic control sign or City tree. After installation the exposed bolt threads should be crimped to prevent theft of the sign.



Continuing duties of the Block Captain or Co-Captains. After the group is formed their duties will depend on their organizational skills and interests, and the nature and objectives of the group. The following are some possibilities:

- Recruit new members
- Maintain a membership list and area map with home addresses
- Keep members informed about area crime and disorder
- Try to see group members frequently
- Establish and maintain a phone tree with home and work numbers that group members can use to contact residents in an emergency
- Develop an area activity profile to help members recognize unusual or suspicious activities in the area. This could include vehicle descriptions, work hours, school hours for children, and scheduled services, e.g., gardening
- Act as a spokesperson for the group
- Serve as liaison with the SPD
- Plan, announce, and facilitate meetings
- Organize crime prevention activities, e.g., watching homes when residents are away

Subsequent Meetings and Activities. Meetings of the whole group should be held at least once a year. They can be held more often if there is information to be distributed and discussed, a problem to address, or a special event to be planned and held. The key to keeping a Neighborhood Watch group active is maintaining interest over time and communicating with members. Meetings can be scheduled to discuss specific crime prevention or other topics. The SPD can also provide officers to talk on domestic violence, workplace violence, child and adult abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, identity theft, landlord/tenant relations, bike safety, homeland security, etc. Check with your Watch Commander to request a talk.

Meetings can also be scheduled to address a serious incident in the area, or two or more less-serious incidents of the same type. Problem solving usually proceeds in the following steps:

Definition. What is the problem? Some examples are car break-ins and thefts, home burglaries, speeding, unlicensed solicitors, graffiti, panhandling, and trash dumping.

Analysis. What are the common elements of the problem? They could be time of day, location, kinds of offenders and victims, kinds of targets, access to targets, methods of defeating security measures, etc.

Response. How can the problem be addressed? What can be done to prevent recurrence or reduce the damage if it does recur? What agencies or organizations are responsible and should help in solving the problem? What are the best things to do for short- and long-term results?

Assessment. Did the problem go away? Was the damage reduced? If not, what else should be done?



Sheridan Police Department

307-672-2413



Neighborhood Watch Facts Brochure



Neighborhood Watch—For a safer Community.

Decades ago crime rates across the U.S. increased at an alarming pace. Citizens and law enforcement agencies focused on developing crime prevention programs to help reduce this growing trend.

In 1972 The National Sheriff's Association organized the National Neighborhood Watch Program. This pilot program was funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the U.S. Department of Justice and was designed to enlist the participation of citizens with law enforcement to help reduce and prevent crime. Since then Neighborhood Watch has become one of the most effective means of fighting crime in our communities. This is because you and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your area, most likely to be the first to see a crime and call for help, and are in the best position to:

- Report code violations, unsafe street conditions, etc. that degrade the quality of life in your area ,
- Take property owners to small claims court to abate nuisances ,
- Keep your block clean and free of graffiti, and
- Provide a safe environment for your children.



What Is Neighborhood Watch?

How to Start and Maintain a Neighborhood Watch Program

The following steps explain how to get a Neighborhood Watch program started and maintained in your area:

Talk to your neighbors. See if there's interest in forming a Neighborhood Watch group in your area. If there is contact the SPD for help.

Talk to the SPD. Contact the SPD station and ask to talk to the Watch Commander regarding Neighborhood Watch. The Watch Commander will suggest how you should proceed and discuss the crime and disorder problems that you will have to deal with.

Talk to your neighbors again. Tell them about the benefits of a program and the problems to be addressed. Ask about convenient times and places for the first meeting. Be sure to mention that Neighborhood Watch does not require frequent meetings or personal risks, and that an officer will be invited to the first meeting to answer questions.

Planning the first meeting. Select a date, time, and place for the first meeting. Invite a police officer. Meetings are usually held at a home, school, church, or community center. They can also be held at a SPD station or Fire Department. Send out meeting announcements a few weeks ahead of the date. You can distribute fliers, make phone calls, or send emails. Send out reminders a few days before the meeting. Prepare an agenda and sign-in sheet for the first meeting. Ask the Watch Commander to talk about the crime and disorder problems in your area, how to get crime information on the Internet, and how the partnership with the SPD will work. Also ask the Watch Commander to bring copies of the SPD's pamphlets on personal and home security, vehicle security, preventing fraud and identity theft, reporting crimes and suspicious activities, and reporting disorder and other problems, obtaining crime information, dealing with homeless people, senior safety and security, vacation safety and security, terrorism prevention, and preventing robberies, burglaries, and other crimes against businesses. The meeting should last about one hour. Consider providing refreshments, e.g., cookies and coffee. The agenda should allow time for questions, answers, and other topics.

What Is Neighborhood Watch?



Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program that enlists the active participation of residents in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime, solve problems, and improve the quality of life in your area. In it you will get to know and work with your neighbors, and learn how to: Recognize and report crimes and suspicious activities,

- Protect yourself, your family, and your property,
- Protect your neighbor's family and property, and
- Identify crime and disorder problems in your area and work with SPD personnel to solve them.

Sheridan Police Department

45 W 12th St
Sheridan, WY 82801
307-672-2413
Fax: 307-675-1041

**In an Emergency
call 911!!!!**