

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a program of:

- ▶ neighbors watching out for each other's property, and
- ▶ citizens aiding the police in combating crime within their communities by acting as extra eyes and ears of the Police Department.

The program is intended to make citizens more vigilant, not to turn them into vigilantes.

A Neighborhood Watch **program may be started** by any subdivision or block group in which **50% or more** of the residents and/or their spouses, of the age of majority, participate. The **block group area** refers to both sides of one street. Each member's objective is to observe the block, or subdivision area, and report any suspected criminal activity to the Police by telephone.

## Rules of Operation

Members should be **cautioned** that strangers in the neighborhood do not necessarily represent criminal activity. **Members shall not use firearms** except in accordance with state law, and then only when their life is clearly threatened. Mobile or foot patrols are discouraged; however, if they are instituted within an area, the **Police Department must be notified** and identification of a distinctive nature must be issued to members, with a copy to the Police Department. Should **CB radio communication networks** be instituted, the block groups will be expected to staff their own monitor posts. Reports over such networks must be transmitted to the Police Department over **telephone lines only**.

## How To Start a Neighborhood Watch Program

The **first step** in organizing a Neighborhood Watch program is to identify one individual to act as a subdivision coordinator and, in the case of a large subdivision group, to assign block captains as needed. The **coordinator will serve as liaison** between the Police Department and the block captains in the subdivision. The block **captain's major function** is to distribute materials and/or information from the Police Department to his/her assigned block group. Once the coordinator and block captains have been selected, **contact should be made with** a member of the **Crime Prevention Section** of the Farmington Hills Police Department, who will provide further instructions on implementation of the program and provide assistance as needed.

The subdivision coordinator will have the responsibility of:

- ▶ initiating the Neighborhood Watch Program as outlined,
- ▶ monitoring its progress, and
- ▶ serving as the groups liaison with the Police Department.

The subdivision coordinator and block **captains shall have no legal authority** on behalf of the City of Farmington Hills or the Police Department.

At least one adult member of at least 50% of the household in your subdivision or block group must **attend a Neighborhood Watch Orientation Meeting** to become certified as an active Neighborhood Watch member. During this meeting, conducted by the Farmington Hills Police Department, prospective members will be instructed on:

- organization, rules,
- laws,

- Police Department capabilities, and
- members responsibilities.

A Neighborhood Watch Program booklet will be provided and instructions given on:

- ▶ how to accurately report observations, such as suspicious persons or circumstances, to the police.
- ▶ topics such as Operation Identification and home security will be discussed.
- ▶ various types of locks and security devices which will be displayed and pamphlets on pertinent crime prevention topics will be distributed as available.

A Neighborhood Watch decal will be provided at the end of the Orientation Meeting.

The Crime Prevention Section encourages **attendance at the Neighborhood Watch Orientation Meeting** since current crime statistics and/or trends are addressed. For those prospective members who cannot attend an orientation meeting, a Neighborhood Watch **training DVD** may be viewed at home. Viewing of this DVD qualifies the viewer as a participating Neighborhood Watch member of his/her subdivision/complex. DVDs are **available for loan to** Neighborhood Watch Coordinators, or a permanent copy can be made for those Neighborhood Watch Coordinators who provide a blank DVD to the Crime Prevention Section. The Neighborhood Watch Coordinator may then loan the training video to prospective Neighborhood Watch members who, after viewing the DVD and signing a verification form, become active Neighborhood Watch members.

A Neighborhood Watch Program **booklet and decal** will also be provided to Neighborhood Watch Coordinators for distribution to each newly certified household. Following the initial Orientation Meeting or video tape training, it is recommended that the subdivision Neighborhood Watch Coordinator **schedule regular meetings** so the Neighborhood Watch group can be made aware of recent developments and crime trends in the city. Regular meetings will provide the police department with an opportunity to present new programs which may further help to deter crime in the community and will help to ensure continuing viability of the program.

Upon successful implementation of the program in a block or subdivision, **the police department will provide Neighborhood Watch signs at subdivision entrances** A crime prevention newsletter will also be sent to the Neighborhood Watch coordinator every two months for distribution throughout the subdivision. Those persons wishing to become involved in the Neighborhood Watch Program should contact the Crime Prevention Section at 248-871-2750, Monday - Friday.