

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH STARTER HANDBOOK

UTAH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
STARTER HANDBOOK

## Want to know the best crime prevention device ever invented?

A good neighbor! In fact, neighbors working together in cooperation with law enforcement can make one of the best crime-fighting teams around. We call it...**Neighborhood Watch!**

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program, which enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in communities. It involves neighbors getting to know each other and working together in a program of mutual assistance. It also involves citizens being trained to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhoods and, implementation of crime prevention techniques, such as home security, operation identification and others.

## Why start a Neighborhood Watch?

There cannot be a law enforcement officer on every corner; therefore citizen involvement is essential to combat crime. You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your community and by cooperating with each other and the police, people can help fight crime in the most effective way-before it begins!

## How do I start a Neighborhood Watch program in my area?

Starting a Neighborhood Watch program might seem like a huge task. Where do we begin? What kind of timetable? Who will be involved in it? How can interest be maintained? What materials are needed? What are the benefits of a Neighborhood Watch Program? All these, and more, are common questions you might ask when facing the challenge of starting a crime prevention program such as Neighborhood Watch. Enclosed in this packet you should find an easy to follow checklist for starting a Neighborhood Watch Program. Utilize it to help in your process. (See page 4)

## Checklist for Starting a Neighborhood Watch Program

1. Determine if there is a need for **and an interest in** having a program in your Neighborhood.
2. Call the Eagle Mountain Division of the Utah County Sheriff's Office (UCSO) at 801-789-6712 or email at [communityprograms@emcity.org](mailto:communityprograms@emcity.org). Express your Neighborhood's interest in starting a Neighborhood Watch Program and have them send you a "Starter Handbook and Leadership Guidebook."
3. Read the Neighborhood Watch Starter Handbook and Leadership Guidebook.
4. Designate a volunteer from your Neighborhood to act as the Area Leader for the Neighborhood Watch Program. The Area Leader will oversee Neighborhood Watch in your specific area. They will be responsible for dividing your area into blocks and recruiting Block Leaders. They should be the person responsible for the remainder of this list. (See Area Leadership Guidebook pages 2 and 5)
5. **To qualify as the Area Leader you must complete and pass a background check. For this background check you must contact the Eagle Mountain Division UCSO at 801-789-6712 to schedule an appointment. Let them know you are in need of a background check for the Volunteer position of Neighborhood Watch Area Leader. You will complete the background check at the Eagle Mountain Division UCSO office at 1650 E Stagecoach Run, Eagle Mountain, UT 84005. Be sure to have I.D. with you. Once the check is complete, the results will be provided to you so that know if you can continue in the process.**
6. Fill out the Area Leader Information (page 7) and map (page 8) and return it to Eagle Mountain Division UCSO, 1650 E Stagecoach Run, Eagle Mountain, UT 84005 or email it to [communityprograms@emcity.org](mailto:communityprograms@emcity.org).
7. Designate a first Neighborhood Watch Meeting place, date and time. It is best if you have a couple of dates to work with.
8. Contact the UCSO liaison with the Eagle Mountain Divison UCSO at 801-789-6712 and ask about their availability to attend your first Neighborhood Watch Meeting. The liaison must be present at this meeting for the Neighborhood Watch Group to get trained, organized and certified. **Please allow at least 2-3 weeks advanced notice for preparation and scheduling time.**
9. After a date, place and time are chosen and cleared through the UCSO, start advertising for the Neighborhood Watch meeting in your Area. Distribute fliers, make phone calls, and even go door to door. (Suggestion: Do this two weeks, one week and one day before the meeting.)

## Checklist for the first Neighborhood Watch Meeting

1. At the start-up meeting, **you are in charge**. Here are some suggestions to ensure success:
  - Have name tags.
  - Provide plenty of seating (have a back up plan in the event of bad weather).
  - Have refreshments available.
  - Allow enough time before and after the meeting for neighbors to socialize.
  - Pass out an attendance sheet where neighbors can list their name, address, phone numbers and email.
  - Have a meeting agenda and stick to it (see the attached example on page 6).
2. Remember, the UCSO personnel are invited guests. To begin the meeting, introduce your guests. Also, take time to let the entire neighborhood members formally introduce themselves and tell where they live.
3. After the introductions and any announcements you (as the leader) want to make, turn the time over to the UCSO. Allow at least one hour for the UCSO's presentation.
4. At the conclusion of the meeting, thank everyone for coming. You may even want to ask for donations for the program. Donations will provide for Neighborhood Watch Street Signs, Neighborhood Watch Window Decals, any paper and copying needs as well as refreshment costs for your area. This is also a good time to recruit Block Leaders if you haven't already.
5. Hold yearly follow-up Neighborhood Watch Meetings to reacquaint with neighbors.
6. Remember your responsibilities as an Area Leader. (See the Area Leadership Guide Book Pages 2 and 5)

Neighborhood Watch Start Up Meeting Agenda Example:  
Tuesday, November 13, 2020

6:45-7:00 PM-Socializing (meet your neighbors)

Refreshments  
Fill out Name Tag Sign  
Attendance Sheet

7:00-7:15 PM-Introductions by Area Leader  
Announcements by Area Leader

7:15-8:15 PM-Neighborhood Watch Training Presentation and Questions

Utah County Sheriff's Office  
About the Neighborhood Watch Program  
Neighborhood Watch Organization  
Participant's Guidelines  
Things To Do Right Now  
Reporting a Crime  
How to Observe  
Suspect Identification  
Vehicle Identification  
Phonetic Alphabet/License Plates  
Neighborhood Watch Integrity  
Questions and Answers

8:15-8:30 PM-Conclusion

Block Leader Recruitment by Area Leader (if needed).  
Socializing (meet your neighbors)/ Donations to Area Leader  
Refreshments

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### Area Leader Information

As part of the Neighborhood Watch start-up process, each new Neighborhood Watch Area Leader is required to fill out certain information. This is required to make certain that the UCSO records are accurately maintained for each new area. After your background check has been completed and you have been given approval to continue the Neighborhood Watch process, complete this form and map and return it to the Eagle Mountain Division UCSO office, 1650 E Stagecoach Run, Eagle Mountain, UT 84005 or email it to [communityprograms@emcity.org](mailto:communityprograms@emcity.org). Failure to do so will result in your Neighborhood Watch area not being activated or trained by the UCSO.

Name	
Address with Zip Code	
Home Phone	
Cell Phone	
Work Phone	
Email	
Area Name (Create a name that describes your Neighborhood Watch Area)	

## Neighborhood Watch Area Map

Using this page, sketch a map of your Neighborhood Watch Area (or print one using the internet). The map does not have to be to scale or highly detailed; it need simply be an overview of the area you want your Neighborhood Watch to cover. Please include street names and coordinates. If you already have an area map, simply attach it to this form.

Neighborhood Watch Area Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

### **Q. How big should our Neighborhood Watch Area be?**

A. The size really depends on your neighborhood set up and how many hours per month you want to spend maintaining the program. We suggest at minimum, neighbors who have a fairly direct view of each other's houses. For a standard city block, this might include both sides of the street, corner houses that look down your block, and backyard neighbors. Neighborhood Watch is meant to look out for yourselves and your neighbors. If you have a Neighborhood Watch group that is too big, it makes it hard to watch a house that is several blocks away. You want a small group of neighbors that you mutually trust—not a group of strangers too large to know each other by name. Don't get carried away!

### **Q. How much time is needed to volunteer as an Area Leader?**

A. The amount of time depends on the size of your area and how devoted you are to the area and success of the program. For a successful Neighborhood Watch Group, the Area Leader should spend about 1-3 hours per month on the program. (Again the time may vary depending on the size area you cover.) This time would include, distributing the Neighborhood Watch newsletter (provided by the UCSO) to your block leaders, making phone calls to block leaders, and members, attending the Quarterly Training Meetings hosted by the UCSO, hosting a yearly Neighborhood Watch Area Party and completing your Area's annual Recertification through the UCSO.

### **Q. How much time is needed to volunteer as a Block Leader?**

A. The amount of time depends on the size of your block and how devoted you are to the block, area and success of the program. For a successful Neighborhood Watch Block, the Block Leader should spend about 1-2 hours per month on the program. (Again the time may vary depending on the size block you cover.) This time would include, distributing the Neighborhood Watch newsletter (provided by your Area Leader) to your block residents, making phone calls to the Area Leader and members, and helping with the annual Neighborhood Watch Area Party.

### **Q. Does Neighborhood Watch cost anything?**

A. No. The UCSO will train and accept your Neighborhood into the Program free of charge. However, if your Neighborhood chooses to post Neighborhood Watch Street Signs, window decals, provide refreshments at parties and so forth, there is a cost involved to the Neighborhood Watch Group. We suggest that you ask Neighborhood residents participating in the program to donate a few dollars a year to help maintain these costs.