

Why Neighborhood Watch?

Over 40 million crimes are committed every year in the United States and the number continues to increase. Law enforcement can't be on every corner, so citizen involvement is crucial to combat this social crisis. With each other and the Police Department, people can help fight crime in their communities in the most effective way—before it begins. It's an opportunity to get acquainted with the people that share your neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Watch Program consists of three core meetings. Those meetings have been designed to give your group maximum benefit from the Neighborhood Watch Program. You are encouraged to schedule additional meetings after you have completed the core meetings. Neighborhood Watch Groups are requested to host a minimum of three meetings per year.



IN AN EMERGENCY CALL:

911

(Police, Fire, Ambulance)

NON-EMERGENCY CALL:

863-834-6900
or **863-834-6912**

The Lakeland Police Department
Community Services Unit
219 N. Massachusetts Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33801

The Lakeland Police Department practices
"Bias-Free Policing"

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Organizing A Neighborhood Watch Group



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WWW.LAKELANDGOV.NET/LPD



Neighborhood Watch

Crime has been increasing in Lakeland and the nation in recent years. In fact, with the country's current economic conditions, crime statistics are expected to show yearly increases.

The City of Lakeland Police Department is working to reduce crime, and needs the help of every citizen in this effort. Property crimes account for 90 percent of all crime that occur in all of the neighborhoods in the city. Neighborhood residents need to involve themselves in the fight against crime by working with the police department and other residents.

Hundreds of burglaries last year could have been prevented had residents closed and locked their doors and windows. The removal of keys from car ignitions would have thwarted countless auto thefts. And had bicycles, stereos, radios, cd players, and jewelry been properly protected and identifiable, theft could have been substantially reduced.

What can citizens do? The Neighborhood Watch program has been designed to encourage citizen participation in reducing crimes for neighborhoods. It is a program of police personnel and residents of a community working together to achieve a common goal. Residents are taught by the police to protect their own property, have concern for their neighbor's property, and observe and report suspicious activities immediately to the police. Reporting suspicious people and actions when observed may prevent a crime or help apprehend criminals.

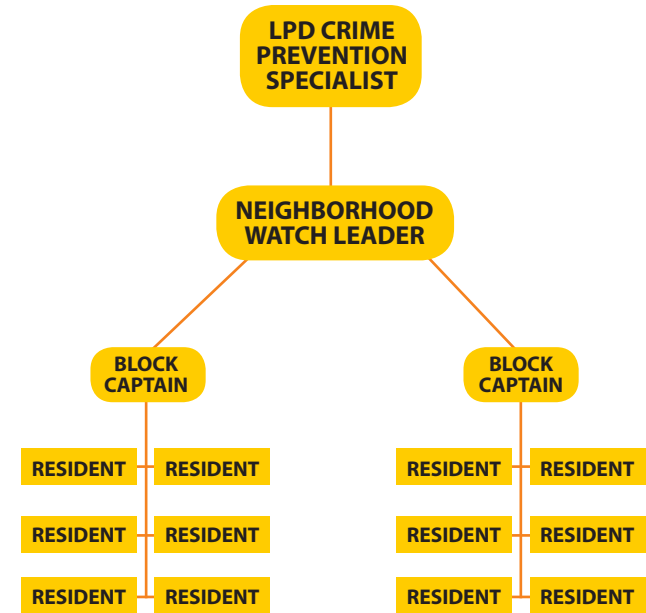
Awareness and involvement are the key elements of Neighborhood Watch. Many of the crimes reported to the Lakeland Police Department would not have occurred had people used a few basic crime prevention techniques and had neighbors become involved in the protection and safety of the area they live in. A sense of community welfare can develop with neighbors helping neighbors.

How to Organize Neighborhood Watch in Your Area

If Neighborhood Watch is not operating in your area, you can organize a group by arranging with your neighbors a convenient time and place to meet. Once the meeting date and location is known, call the Lakeland Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at 863-834-6912 and ask a representative to explain the Neighborhood Watch at your meeting.

At the first meeting the police department will deliver a presentation on Neighborhood Watch and discuss crime in the city and the importance of reporting suspicious activities immediately to the police communications center. A Neighborhood Watch Coordinator should be named. Each block in the neighborhood should then be organized and block captains appointed. The residents on a block should keep a map showing the address and telephone number of each resident in the area. This information will be useful when reporting suspicious activity in the neighborhood to the police.

Once the blocks are organized, a communication network can be established. Information about crime problems or suspicious activities can be disseminated throughout the area. Should a crime pattern start developing in a neighborhood, the Crime Prevention Unit would call the Neighborhood Watch Leader (Coordinator) who would call the block captains. Each block captain would call resident on first part of chain, and then residents would continue calling on chain until the call leads back to the block captain. When the last phone call is made to notify the block captain the phone chain has been complete, the captain notifies the watch leader (coordinator) that everyone has been notified.



exchange by reporting suspicious activity to the police department and then calling the block captain who will call another resident to begin the phone chain. The block captain will then call the watch leader (coordinator) to activate the phone chains with remaining block captains.

Neighborhood watch is a simple but effective program: citizens and the police working to solve one of the city's most serious problems.

For more information and assistance regarding Neighborhood Watch, call the Lakeland Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at 834-6912.

