



SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A TRADITION OF SERVICE SINCE 1856

Information revised for Town of Portola Valley.

Creating a Neighborhood Watch

Dear Neighborhood Watch Block Captain:

The Neighborhood Watch program is about resident participation and involvement in a Sheriff's Office/community cooperative battle against burglaries and other neighborhood crimes. The program's primary purpose is personal and property protection for you, your family, and your neighbors. As an extension of the eyes and ears of the Sheriff's Office, your involvement can directly affect the crime rate in your neighborhood.

I. HOW TO START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM ON YOUR BLOCK:

A volunteer from your block must be selected to represent your block as the NW Block Captain. The prospective Captain must contact Deputy Ricardo Maldonado at rmaldonado@smcgov.org (650-257-3400 x2013), or Portola Valley Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Lorrie Duval (lduval@portolavalley.net) to receive a NW start-up packet.

It is the responsibility of the prospective Neighborhood Watch Captain to read all handout material in the packet, and to understand the concept of the NW program. After reading all of the handout material, follow the steps below.

First, re-contact Deputy Maldonado to reserve a meeting date for your block. Meeting dates are by appointment only Tuesday - Thursday evenings. The meetings normally last (approximately) an hour, from 7:00pm to 8:00pm. The Captain is responsible for arranging a meeting place prior to reserving a meeting date. Suggestions for meeting locations are: NW Captain's residence, another residence on your block, a nearby church, or a school.

SECOND, after a meeting date has been reserved, the "*Neighborhood Watch Informational Meeting*" flyers are to be filled out by the NW Captain and distributed to all residents on your block or area. Flyers can be obtained from Deputy Maldonado.

THIRD, the "*Neighborhood Watch Informational Meeting*" flyers should be distributed to all residents on your block, to canvass your block for interest in the program. Personal visits/contact is recommended so that you can explain what the program is about. It is generally recommended that a Captain maintain an area the size of one block. For the initial meeting we encourage Block Captains to contact residents from surrounding blocks. After the meeting, Deputy Maldonado or Ms. Duval can assist the Block Captain in breaking surrounding blocks into separate groups.

FOURTH, Deputy Maldonado will attend your initial meeting for the Neighborhood Watch presentation. Any questions your neighborhood may have about current crime concerns should be presented to him prior to the meeting. Participants will be instructed on how the NW programs assists residents in reducing crime on your block, in a working partnership with the Sheriff's Office.

II. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH CAPTAIN AT THE MEETING:

1. Supply nametags for all residents.
2. Distribute handout material from the meeting to residents who were unable to attend.
3. Develop and distribute NW Area Map.

This map is confidential and only the residents on the block will be supplied with a copy. This map is used to help members give adequate information when reporting suspicious activity in your neighborhood. A map of your block should be developed to:

- a. Clearly identify homes and cross streets on your block.
- b. Show the name, address, and phone number of each home. It is recommended that both the home and business phone number be included.

It is important that this map be kept updated and reflects all changes in residents, phone numbers, etc.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH CAPTAIN AFTER THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH BLOCK:

After your NW Block is implemented, it is important to keep your group active in maintaining people's interest. Communicating and cooperating with your neighbors and the Sheriff's Office is key.

The following activities and responsibilities are designed to complement your NW program:

1. Arrange for secondary meetings. Topics and speakers could include:
 - a. Identity Theft
 - b. Drug and Gang Awareness for Parents
 - c. Code Enforcement
 - d. Fire Prevention
 - e. Disaster Preparedness

2. Update your Area map to include any new residents who move into your block.

3. You are responsible for distributing all information and NW bulletins that have been provided to you by the Sheriff's Office, to the residents on your block.

4. *Report to SMC SO, any damaged or stolen signs for replacement (for County signs only).

NOTE: If a sign is stolen, you must make a police report for petty theft. Call (650) 363-4911, ext. 1. You will be given a police report number. After receiving a police report number, notify SMC SO deputy for a replacement sign. It is important to make a police report on the theft of your NW sign(s) to enable the Sheriff's Office to file criminal charges of petty theft, or possession of stolen property, against the suspect(s).

5. If you move from the area or can no longer be the Captain, it is important to solicit a neighbor on your block to assume the responsibilities of NW Captain, and report this information to the NW Program coordinator. In order to share the workload and responsibilities, the NW Captain position may be rotated to another resident on you block. It is important to notify Deputy Maldonado and Lorrie Duval of any changes in Captains for mailing purposes.

*The Town of Portola Valley is responsible for signage in the Town right-of-way.



Neighborhood Watch – The First Steps:

- 1. Establish a block captain:** The Block Captain is in charge of an individual block, and the organization of the houses on it. The Captain will collect pertinent information from the involved houses, such as phone numbers, and emergency contacts. Once the decision has been made on how the block will communicate, the Captain will be in charge of maintaining the information, and dispersing information back to the block.
- 2. Establish interested houses:** Attempt to locate households and residents on the block who are interested in participating in the neighborhood watch.
- 3. Establish block parameters:** Recommended that no more than 20-25 houses be involved in one watch, generally this breaks into about one block of houses. If more than 25 houses are involved, the involved block will want to have an obvious geographical break from surrounding blocks, such as a cross street or a cul de sac dividing the next block.
- 4. Make sure that all houses have police contact info and reporting info:** The Captain will want to ensure that all participating members have not only 911, but also the non-emergency phone number (650) 363-4911, ext. 1, programmed into participant's phones. Participants should also be made aware of how to report suspicious circumstances or suspicious subjects within the neighborhood, as well as any crimes that may occur.
- 5. Establish the format for dispersal of neighborhood information:** Information can be dispersed via hand outs, social networking, or word of mouth. More and more neighborhood watch programs are using websites and social networks, so that residents can easily access information on their own timeline.
- 6*. Choose the locations for Neighborhood Watch signs:** Each block will be provided with two neighborhood watch signs to place at the "entrance and exit" to the block. In some cases, blocks may only have one sign issued to them, depending on where placement of exiting signage has been placed.

*Check Town of Portola Valley Municipal Code and Design Guidelines. Information intended as general guidelines for San Mateo County.



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Steps to Neighborhood Watch – Block Captain's Duties:

The role of the Block Captain is to:

Now that your Neighborhood Watch program is implemented, it is important to keep your group active in maintaining people's interest. Communicating and cooperating with your neighbors and the Sheriff's Office is key. The following activities and responsibilities are designed to compliment your Neighborhood watch program:

- As the Block Captain your main responsibility is to be the spokesperson for your block.
- Serves as liaison between your block and the Neighborhood Watch program coordinator as well as other block captains.
- Organize and arrange Neighborhood Watch meetings.
- Maintain a master list of all members. Update your Area map to include any new residents who move onto your block, and those residents who leave your block.
- Distribute all information and Neighborhood Watch bulletins from the Sheriff's Office, to all the involved residents on your block.
- Report to the Sheriff's Office any damaged or stolen Neighborhood Watch* signs for replacement. NOTE: If a sign is stolen, you must make a police report for petty theft. Call (650) 363-4911, ext. 1 to make the police report. You will be given a police report number. After receiving a police report number, notify Deputy Ron DeRespini for a replacement sign. It is important to make a police report on the theft of your Neighborhood Watch sign(s), to enable the Sheriff's Office to file criminal charges of petty theft, or possession of stolen property, against the suspect(s).
- If you move from the area, it is important to solicit a neighbor on your block to assume the responsibilities of Block Captain and report this information to the Sheriff's Office.

*Check Town of Portola Valley Municipal Code and Design Guidelines. Information intended as general guidelines for San Mateo County.

Develop and distribute maps:

To help members give adequate information when reporting suspicious activity in the neighborhood, a map of your area should be developed to:

- Clearly identify streets and cross-streets.
- Show the name, address, and phone number of each home.
- Include emergency numbers for the Sheriff's Office, fire, and ambulance.
- It is important that this map be kept updated reflecting all changes in residents, phone numbers, address, etc.

Neighborhood Watch Block Captains	Homes Served By N.W. Block Captains
Nancy Blair 2849 Greystone Lane	Nelson – 2861 Greystone Lane Lee – 2867 Greystone Lane Philips – 2871 Greystone Lane Hall – 2872 Greystone Lane Patell – 2870 Greystone Lane Bowers – 2866 Greystone Lane Franklin – 2860 Greystone Lane Drobeniuc – 2856 Greystone Lane Hagigi – 2852 Greystone Lane Repasky – 2848 Greystone Lane Kiersksy – 2844 Greystone Lane
Arun Shah 3574 Greystone Circle	Mui – 3570 Greystone Circle Frady – 3571 Greystone Circle Sehgal – 3575 Greystone Circle Williams – 3580 Greystone Circle Whitley – 3584 Greystone Circle Payne – 3585 Greystone Circle Painter – 3588 Greystone Circle
Jon Yaeger 2896 Greystone Cove North	Skinner – 3448 Greystone Circle Jooma – 3454 Greystone Circle Foster – 3458 Greystone Circle Earnhardt – 2900 Greystone Cove North Zeliff – 2899 Greystone Cove North Fowler – 2895 Greystone Cove North Franklin/Kerr – 2891 Greystone Cove North
Tom Davis	Dewjee – 3592 Greystone Circle Jetha – 3595 Greystone Circle

Gather and share information:

Knowing your neighbors' basic habits will help you to recognize unusual or suspicious activities.

Basic information you might exchange includes:

- Home and work phone numbers
- Number and ages of family members
- Work hours
- School hours of children
- Number and types of automobiles
- Who has dog(s)
- Planned vacations or visitors
- Scheduled deliveries or repairs
- Any other helpful information

You are on your way:

Now that your Neighborhood Watch network is established; be sure that everyone understands and observes the following general guidelines:

- Be suspicious. Report unusual or suspicious behavior to the Sheriff's Office at **(650) 363-4911, ext. 1**. Write down descriptions of the person(s) and license numbers of any vehicles involved.
- Keep a trusted neighbor informed if your house will be unoccupied for an extended period. It is important to leave the neighbor a way of reaching you if an emergency should arise.
- Look after your neighbor's house when they're away, and ask them to look after yours. This includes collecting mail, newspapers, and other deliveries which would indicate at a glance that no one is home.
- Establish and attend meetings put on by the Sheriff's Office. Find out about local crime trends and what you can do about them.
- Above all, be concerned. It is the most effective way to reduce or prevent crime, and make your neighborhood safe.
- Remember - your job is to *report* crime. The responsibility for apprehending criminals belongs to the Sheriff's Office.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH CHECKLIST

YOU WILL NEED:

- A minimum of 10 households committed to starting a neighborhood watch.
- A list of what issues initially need to be addressed in your community.
- A means of communicating with residents, e.g. e-mail, fliers, telephone trees.
- Publicity for the initial neighborhood watch meeting (at least two week's notice).
- A meeting agenda to keep things moving on track.
- A place to meet—a resident's house or apartment, community center, school, or library.
- The NW program coordinator should be present to discuss crime and safety issues in the neighborhood.
- A map of the community with spaces for names, addresses, and phone numbers of all households.
- Brochures or other materials on topics of interest to the residents.
- Facts about crime in your neighborhood. There are often cases where residents' perceptions may not be supported by facts, and accurate information can reduce the fear of crime.

TO ADD EXCITEMENT (OPTIONAL):

- Mix business with pleasure - allow attendees time to socialize.
- Seek out neighborhood go-getters - civic leaders - to be your advocates and mentors.
- Work with existing organizations such as neighborhood associations, tenants' associations, or local civic clubs.
- Provide speakers on topics of community interest.
- Start a neighborhood newsletter.

TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS:

- Endorsement by the Sheriff's Office. This agency is the major source of information on local crime patterns, crime prevention education, and crime reporting.
- Libraries can provide research materials, videos, computers and meeting space.
- Churches and places of worship can provide meeting places, and a good source of volunteers.