



Community Support Bureau

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT

Arlington Police Department • P.O. Box 1065, Arlington, Texas 76004-1065 • (817) 459-5725

Dear Citizen:

Thank you for your interest in organizing Community Watch in your neighborhood. I hope you find that your neighbors share your concern in keeping your area a safe place to live. Community Watch is a program for citizens, run by citizens. It is an approach to reducing crime in Arlington, focusing on the residents of each neighborhood working together in cooperation with the Arlington Police Department.

Enclosed is an information packet about Community Watch. Included in the packet is a Coordinator's form, a guide on how to organize for a meeting, and sample flyers to provide you ideas for advertising your upcoming Community Watch meetings.

If you decide to become the Community Watch coordinator in your area, please complete and return the Coordinator's form to the Community Services office. We will then list you as a contact for the neighborhood.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 817-459-5725. We are looking forward to becoming a partner with your neighborhood in preventing crime!

Sincerely,

Becky M. Hixson
Administrative Assistant
Crime Prevention Unit

Enclosures

COMMUNITY WATCH MEETING

WHEN? _____

WHERE? _____

COMMUNITY WATCH is a program for citizens, run by citizens. It is an approach to reducing crime in Arlington that focuses on residents of each neighborhood. Neighbors working in cooperation with the Arlington Police Department can reduce the level of crime in our neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY WATCH is an on-going process. Once an area is organized, the citizens have a "support system" with which to work. The COMMUNITY WATCH COORDINATOR can pass along information about crime to the block captains who will then disseminate the information to the citizens in the neighborhood and vice versa. Residents of COMMUNITY WATCH areas should attend additional meetings from time to time in order to update themselves or learn additional information on how to keep a safe community.

When we hear about CRIME we naturally like to think that it cannot happen to us but crime does and is happening in our neighborhood. The level of crime around us occurs in direct correlation with what we are willing to tolerate. Join us at our upcoming COMMUNITY WATCH meeting to learn more about the prevention of crime. We all need to work together to foster the attitude that any crime is more than we are willing to accept.

As your COMMUNITY WATCH COORDINATOR, I invite you to give a little of your time to learn easy ways to reduce the risk of your home and your family falling victim to crime. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY WATCH MEETING ACTIVITIES AND GUEST SPEAKERS

Neighborhood Directory
Newsletter
Status Sheet
Carpooling
Babysitting
Co-ops
Go to Ranger's games
Clean up parks, median
Teen Court information
Latch Key Kid information
Tours of City Buildings

Arlington Life Shelter – 817-548-9885
Mission Arlington – 817-277-6620
Gangs (for adults only) – 817- 459-5360
Code Enforcement – 817-459-6777
Parks & Recreation – 817-459-5499
Animal Control – 817-459-5898
Citizens Police Academy – Officer Doug Glotfelty – 817-459-6072
Citizens on Patrol (C.O.P.) – Curtice Ervin – 817-459-5732
Fire Safety & Prevention – 817-459-5560
Volunteer Services – 817-459-6869
Women's Shelter –817-548-0583
Neighborhood Services – 817-459-6652

Community Watch Coordinator's Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of a Community Watch Coordinator will vary with each Community Watch group. Each coordinator and Community Watch group will tailor the duties and responsibilities to the needs of the group. The following are some of the key duties and responsibilities; however, a more complete list can be found in the Community Watch manual:

- Hold an organizational meeting with other concerned citizens to establish the goals of the organization and develop a network of volunteers.
- Define the boundaries of the Community Watch group. Identify the areas of the neighborhood with active volunteers.
- Coordinate the date(s) for the program(s) with the Community Support office.
- Design, print and distribute the flyers announcing the meeting. Attend the Community Watch meeting, (if you cannot attend, have a representative there on behalf of the coordinator) greet neighbors and have them sign in at the meeting.
- Serve as the contact person between the Community Watch organization and the Community Support office for dissemination of crime analysis information.
- Attend, or have a representative of the Community Watch area attend, each of the quarterly Community Watch coordinator meetings.
- Submit requests for Community Watch sign installation to the Community Support office after the area is properly organized and qualifications met.
- Disseminate crime analysis information to section coordinators and block captains. Consider publishing a newsletter to keep the neighborhood informed.
- Plan at least one community meeting each year to meet with new residents and discuss new topics important to the organization. Consider having quarterly meetings. The following are possible topics and speakers.

Arlington Fire Department – Fire Safety
City of Arlington Code Enforcement – What is Code Enforcement and How
Can They Assist Your Neighborhood?
Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Training
Women’s Shelter or Rape Crisis
Teen Court – How it Works and Who is Eligible
Stranger Danger for Parents – Community Support Officers
Arlington Police Department Gang Unit Officers
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design – Community Support
Officers

The Community Watch Coordinators’ Manual is a guide. Complete the Community Watch Coordinator’s Application form and download the manual from our [website](#).

Organizing a Community Watch Program

A Community Watch Program is an organization of concerned citizens working together as good neighbors to reduce the crime in their neighborhood. Community Watch programs take many forms, but in all cases, organizing by blocks is the cornerstone of all citizens’ crime prevention programs.

The person who decides to form a Community Watch group is known as the “Coordinator”. The coordinator will decide the size of the area that will be organized into a Community Watch.

Large Community Watch “areas” are normally residential subdivisions, homeowner’s associations, multi-family properties, or a clearly identifiable geographic grouping of homes.

This typically involves several streets with several blocks each.

Small Community Watch “areas” may be any portion of a residential subdivision or geographic grouping of homes, including organizations as small as just a few homes on one block.

Step 1 - Talk With neighbors and friends.

Ask for their participation in a small group to take the first steps in starting a Community Watch Program.

Explain the need for and the value of a Neighborhood Community Watch.

Define the boundaries of the area to be organized.

Begin recruiting block captains to assist with the Community Watch area.

Enlist a Co-coordinator if necessary to share the responsibilities.

Step 2 - Contact the Arlington Police Department Community Support Bureau at 817 459-5725. They will let you know who your geographic Officer is who will coordinate the program to avoid duplication.

Explain that you would like to start a Neighborhood Community Watch and ask for help from a crime prevention representative.

Complete and return the "Community Watch Coordinator" form to the Community Support office.

Discuss the size and boundaries of the area considered for a program.

Step 3 - Planning the first neighborhood meeting:

Schedule the date of the first Community Watch meeting and notify the Community Support office. Please schedule your meeting on a week night evening, preferably Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, and give your Crime Prevention officer notice to insure their availability to attend your meeting.

Programs are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Six to eight weeks advanced scheduling is appropriate.

The patrol "beat" officer may be scheduled for the program, but the beat officer's availability to conduct the program is contingent on calls for police service. In the event of a serious incident, the scheduled beat officer might be unavailable for the program.

If the Crime Prevention officer is scheduled for the program, feel free to contact the beat officer and invite the officer to attend the meeting as well. Successful Community Watch groups have a close working relationship with their beat officer.

The Coordinator will be responsible for securing a location for the meeting. The location can be a school, church or other facility agreed upon by the Coordinator and

the Community Support Bureau. During the A.I.S.D. school year, the schools typically can be reserved through the administration building and the school principal at no charge.

Meetings can be held in private residences, but allow adequate room for seating and ask neighbors to bring their own chairs if necessary.

Design a simple notice announcing the meeting. Recruit volunteers from the neighborhood to hand deliver an invitation to every home in the area. **Do not** place any flyers or invitations in mailboxes unless the appropriate postage is affixed. **(It is a violation of federal law and rigidly enforced by the postal inspectors.)**

Appoint a refreshment committee and door prize committee (if desired) to make the arrangements for the first meeting. Obtain a door prize. Many local businesses are willing to assist with this request.

Step 4 - The first meeting:

The initial meeting is to provide information about Community Watch and residential burglary prevention.

Have a sign-in table at the entrance. The Community Support officer will provide a sign-in sheet. The Community Support officer will take the sign-in sheet at the conclusion of the meeting, make a copy and mail the originals to the coordinator for your records. Hand out 3"x5" cards and pencils as people arrive.

Plan your meeting agenda to include:

- A.** Introduce yourself as the Community Watch coordinator. Explain the purpose of the meeting. (If you cannot or will not speak in front of the group, the Community Support officer can conduct the entire meeting.)
- B.** Explain the need and value of a Neighborhood Community Watch. Mention that: Community Watch does not require frequent meetings. Community Watch does not require anyone to take any personal risk in preventing crime. Community Watch leaves responsibility for apprehending criminals with the police.
- C.** Define the volunteer Community Watch positions and duties; Community Watch coordinator (and Co-chair) and Block Captains (if needed).
- D.** Plan a 2-3 minute break to allow each person to fill out 3"x5" card which should include:

Name; Address; Telephone numbers; Email address(es); and Willingness to serve in a Community Watch position and the tasks you would volunteer to assist with. (Possibly the amount of time or job task they would be willing to assume).

Citizens will get involved if they realize that the task they are volunteering for will not require an on-going large time commitment. When requesting volunteer support, define the job tasks in amount of time required.

E. Collection of cards.

F. Introduction of police department representative who will present a program on Residential Burglary Prevention. The program will generally last one to one and a half hours. It will include the following:

An explanation of Neighborhood Community Watch.

Crime occurrences and problems in your area.

Effective crime prevention techniques for your home and neighborhood safety.

Suspicious activity observation and reporting.

G. Question and answer period.

After A Meeting - What Then?

Contact your block captains and other volunteers within one week of the meeting. Confirm that they are willing to assist with a particular task. Building your volunteer base is important for the Community Watch area to survive.

Encourage citizens who are the victims of crime to report the crime to 911. Share area crime information with block captains. Too often, neighborhoods get complacent if they are not aware of crime in their neighborhood. Sharing information may also lead to suspect and suspect vehicle information.

Consider printing a monthly or quarterly newsletter to keep your neighborhood informed. Funding for the printing expenses may be provided in exchange for a small ad from a neighborhood business. Persons involved in insurance, Tupperware, heating and A/C repair, and lawn care that live in your neighborhood may be interested in this local advertising space.

Community Watch Coordinator

Community Watch Group Name _____

Coordinator's Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Community Watch Group Boundaries

N _____
E _____
S _____
W _____

Are these the boundaries to a homeowners association or subdivision? If so, please list the name: _____

Approx. how many homes are located within these boundaries? _____

The Arlington Police Department Community Support Bureau must provide a list of Community Watch Coordinators and subsequent information to anyone requesting it. You have the right to request that your name not be released for anything other than legitimate Community Watch Business. Please sign your name on the line below if you do not want your name, address, or telephone number released, other than for Community Watch purposes.

(Signature) (Date)

Please return this form to:
Community Support Bureau
Arlington Police Department – Crime Prevention Unit
P.O. Box 1065, MS 04-0120
Arlington, TX 76004-1065

For Office Use Only:

District _____
Sector _____
Beat _____
PRA _____

Request for Signs Submitted _____
Signs Installed _____