

**Neighbourhood Watch**

**For**

**Apartment Buildings**

# Neighbourhood Watch

## Objective

Neighbourhood Watch is a community crime prevention program uniting neighbours to reduce crime.

## History

Neighbourhood Watch began in Seattle, Washington in the early 1970's. The community was asked to be the eyes and the ears for the police as they could not be everywhere all the time.

The program has spread to many countries all over the world, under various names and logos.

## How it works

### **Awareness:**

Everyday the Neighbourhood Watch office receives information about crime that has happened from each police division. Volunteers phone this information to each Neighbourhood Watch program, when a crime occurs in their area. By giving information such as the time, date, location, method of entry and suspect description, the neighbourhood can become more aware of patterns of crime and be on the lookout for anyone suspicious.

### **Education:**

Learn about personal security, home security, what is suspicious, and latest trends in crime.

### **Communication:**

The Neighbourhood Watch network is very important. By communicating information about crime prevention tips on a regular basis, everyone benefits.

### **Getting to know your neighbours:**

If you know your neighbours, you can recognize strangers and know when something is unusual or suspicious. You can keep an eye on each other's home and pick up each other's mail and newspapers when on holiday.

### **Maintenance:**

It is difficult to keep the enthusiasm, especially if crime has decreased. People think that the problem is solved, and the Neighbourhood Watch program can become dormant. It is very important to try to have regular meetings and newsletters to keep the interest up.

### **Working Together:**

By working together, the community and the police, crime is reduced and your neighbourhood becomes a much safer and better place to live.

# Steps to Organize

## **1. Set up a meeting:**

- Choose a local school, library, community center, church or lobby in an apartment building
- The Neighbourhood Watch office can apply for a permit to use a gym or room in a public school

## **2. Meeting Notice:**

- A small group of neighbours could easily deliver 50 or more flyers each, door to door
- The Neighbourhood Watch office can help you create your first flyer
- For apartment buildings, you can post a notice on your bulletin board, elevator or in the front lobby

## **3. First Meeting:**

- A representative from the Neighbourhood Watch office will lead the meeting
- The Crime Prevention Officer from your police division usually attends
- The Neighbourhood Watch representative will talk about how the program works, how to set it up and why it is so important
- Depending on the turn out, people are asked to volunteer
- We need one person per floor
- We need a committee of two or three to be the building leaders
- The latest crimes and statistics will be mentioned as well as crime prevention information

## **4. Training Meeting:**

- To be held a few weeks after the first meeting in order to train the volunteers and to answer any questions they may have
- A Neighbourhood Watch Captain button is given to each volunteer to wear when they are going door to door

If over 50% of the neighbours join the program, Neighbourhood Watch signs are erected at the entrance to your property.

## **5. Newsletters:**

- It is important to have a newsletter to inform your neighbours of the latest crimes, prevention tips, etc.
- Since everyone cannot attend the meetings, this is a good way to keep in contact
- We suggest having a newsletter go out 3 or 4 times per year. One page is enough. Too many and they won't read it.
- Keep it positive
- We have cartoons and logos that you can use to liven it up

The Neighbourhood Watch office will help you create your first newsletter, but due to lack of funds the programs are encouraged to find their own methods of printing, such as through a school, local merchant or donations from the neighbourhood. Sometimes the City Councillor will offer to print a newsletter.

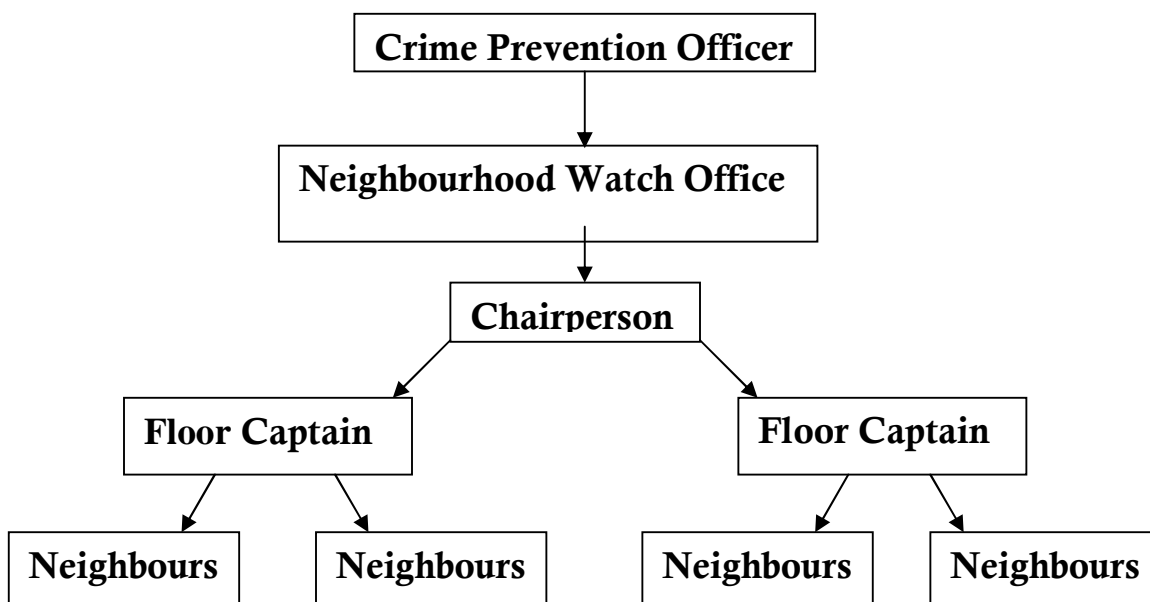
## Committee and Chairperson's Role

**Note:** We advise having a committee rather than just one person on their own. This will help keep the program alive.

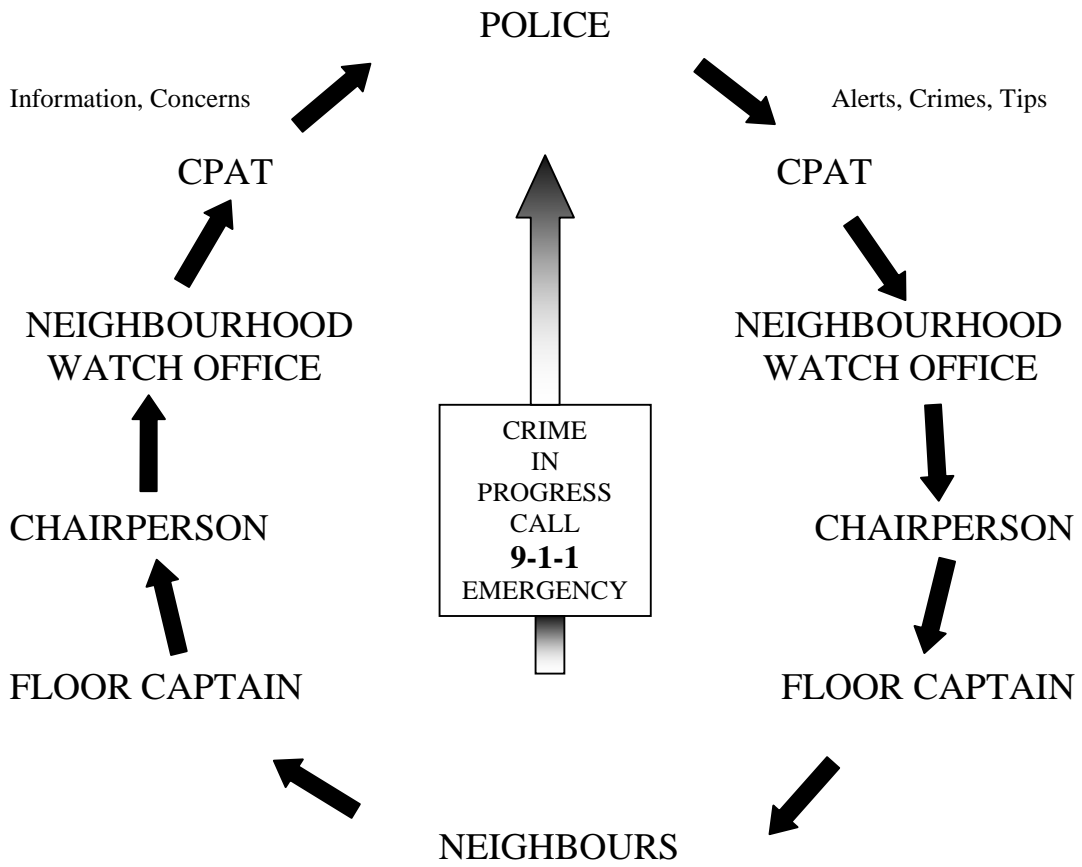
A chairperson and an assistant should be chosen to be the liaison between the police, The Neighbourhood Watch office and the community. There could also be a treasurer, newsletter, editor, etc.

### Role:

- 1) Oversee the organization of your community
- 2) Be a liaison between your community, the police and the Neighbourhood Watch office
- 3) Help to find Floor Captains
- 4) Ensure that information is relayed to the community
- 5) Attend annual training meetings
- 6) Ensure that newsletters are prepared regularly
- 7) Hold meetings for your community and your helpers
- 8) Make a list of your assistants. Send a copy to your Neighbourhood Watch office
- 9) Encourage your volunteers
- 10) Find a replacement if you are unable to continue in this role. A program will die without leadership



# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH COMMUNICATION FLOW



**ACTION CIRCLE  
WORKING TOGETHER**

## **Other Materials Available**

- Neighbours' Night Out Kits
- Meeting Ideas
- Sample Newsletters
- Cartoons for Newsletters
- Neighbourhood Watch Letterhead and Logos
- Vacation Tips
- Winter Tips
- Holiday Season Tips
- Calls to the Police
- Description of Suspects

## **Pamphlets Available**

- Crime Prevention Association of Toronto
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Personal Security
- Home Security
- Apartment Security
- A Caring Community
- Frauds and Scams
- Graffiti
- Auto Theft
- Purse Snatch

This material, plus information on many topics relating to crime prevention, community safety and the justice system is available at:

**17 Fairmeadow Ave., Suite 206**

**North York, Ont. M2P 1W6**

**Phone: (416) 225-1102, Fax: 225-2340**

**Website: [www.cptoronto.org](http://www.cptoronto.org)**

**email: [william@cptoronto.org](mailto:william@cptoronto.org)**

## Floor Captain's Instructions

**You are the link** between the chairperson of your building and your neighbours. You may be asked to pass information on the people that live on your floor or they may alert you of a problem or concern that should be passed onto your chairperson and or police.

1. **Get to know your neighbours.** Canvass the people who live on your floor. Wear your Neighbourhood Watch Captain button. Introduce yourself and tell them what Neighbourhood Watch is about. Ask them if they would like to join the program. If they do, put their name, suite number and phone number on a list. Try to visit briefly with them whenever you are handing out material.
2. **Welcome your new neighbours. Update your list of names, apartment suites and phone numbers when new neighbours move in.** A good idea is to use a pencil; it makes it easier to rub out and keeps your list neater. Explain the program to them. If necessary, give out pamphlets.
3. **If the Neighbourhood Watch office requests your assistance, pass on the information quickly.** It may be a description of a suspicious person or vehicle. If there has been a crime, **DO NOT GIVE OUT THE NUMBER OF THE APARTMENT SUITE INVOLVED.** Do tell them when and how it happened and the kinds of things stolen. We believe it is better to be aware and take precautions, than not to know at all. You do not have to contact everyone yourself. For instance, you tell five people and they each tell five people.
4. **Try to get others involved.** Don't try to look after too many apartments yourself. Sometimes, you may have to cover two to three floors until you can get others involved. One person per floor makes the job an easy one.
5. **Encourage everyone on your floor to let you know when any crime occurs.** Pass the information on to your chairperson. Make certain they realize they must call the police first.
6. **Get involved in Neighbours' Night Out.** This is an annual event celebrated across the city on the third Tuesday in June and helps to get the neighbours to know each other.
7. **If you are moving or have to give up your job as Floor Captain, please find a replacement first.** The chairperson, police or the Neighbourhood Watch office does not know your neighbours well enough to do this.

**Crime prevention is truly effective when crimes occur, but when nothing happens, people become complacent and careless. It is up to you to provide the leadership that will keep your family, your home and your neighbourhood safe.**

**YOU ARE THE KEY TO CRIME PREVENTION!**