

## What types of activities might you get involved in through your Neighborhood Watch group?

- **Community Emergency Response Teams**, which educate people about disaster preparedness and train them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.
- **Volunteers in Police Service**, which uses citizen volunteers to provide support services to local law enforcement.
- **National Night Out**, which is the first Tuesday in August, is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. Thousands of neighborhoods turn on outside lights and gather for neighborhood events such as block parties, cookouts, parades, and safety fairs.
- Groups also organize **problem-solving activities** such as adopting a park or playground and painting over graffiti – or **social events** such as sponsoring a block party, potluck dinner, holiday parade or picnic.

## Beyond day-to-day crime prevention, Neighborhood Watch groups can help the community in many ways:

- Developing a community evacuation plan; creating a neighborhood directory with phone numbers and email addresses for everyone in the neighborhood
- Helping neighbors develop emergency preparedness plans
- Discussing local warning systems and how to find information on evacuation routes and temporary shelters in emergency situations
- Discussing potential terrorist targets in or near your community—such as power plants, airports, and bridges—and the consequences of an attack.

# SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff-Coroner Eddie Engram



707-565-2650



2796 Ventura Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403



sonomasheriff.org



### Important Phone Numbers

Emergency.....	9-1-1
Dispatch (Non-Emergency).....	565-2121
Business Line (Non-Emergency).....	565-2650
River Sub-Station.....	869-0202
Sonoma Valley Sub.....	996-9495



SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## Neighborhood Watch Program



In partnership with our communities, we commit to provide professional, firm, fair, and compassionate public safety services with integrity and respect.

SONOMASHERIFF.ORG

## Why Neighborhood Watch?

**As part of the community, the Sheriff's Office plays an important role in keeping the community safe.**

**However, citizen involvement is essential to combat crime. You and your neighbors know what is going on in your community the best. By cooperating with each other and law enforcement, people can help fight crime in their community in the most effective way – before it begins.**

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

An active Neighborhood Watch (NW) is one of the most successful and least costly crime prevention programs available. Neighborhood Watch is a cooperative effort between the Sheriff's Office and its citizens. It is designed to help reduce residential burglaries and other crimes.

A deputy and Community Services Officer will attend your meeting to get you started.

You will learn how to:

- Identify and report suspicious activity
- Better safeguard your home and property
- Be prepared in case of emergencies
- And much more...

We will also bring an up to date list of crime statistics for your area and discuss any concerns.

By working with your neighbors and the Sheriff's Office, you can help fight crime in your neighborhood the most effective way. Although the Sheriff's Office provides guidance in organizing and maintaining Neighborhood Watch groups, community volunteers, such as you, actually run the program. That way you can tailor the program to your own neighborhood's unique character.

## How Do I Start a Neighborhood Watch in my Area?

**Starting a group is easy. Follow these 5 simple steps to start your group....**

**Step One:** Write a letter or talk to your neighbors and encourage them to participate in a NW program.

**Step Two:** Plan your meeting; determine the best possible date, time, and location to hold your first meeting. Have a few dates and times in mind.

**Step Three:** Call the Crime Prevention office at least two weeks in advance to schedule a meeting.

**Step Four:** Once the meeting is confirmed by the Crime Prevention Community Services Officer publicize your meeting. Print flyers, write a letter, or talk to your neighbors.

**Step Five:** Have the meeting! Learn how to protect you, your neighbors and your neighborhood.



## How Do I Keep Our Neighborhood Watch Active?

It takes more than just one person to keep a Neighborhood Watch active and successful. Once a group is established in your area, members are encouraged to watch out for one another and hold regular meetings or neighborhood events at least once or twice a year. This way everyone can keep up-to-date on current crime trends and continue to build a sense of community.

The Sheriff's Office does not need to attend every meeting to keep the group active. You are encouraged to run meetings on your own after our initial visit. We are always happy to attend meetings in the future.

Contact your local Crime Prevention Unit for ideas on keeping your Neighborhood Watch active. Here are some commonly held beliefs, the reality behind those beliefs, and how Neighborhood Watch can help you and your neighbors...

*"Crime's not a problem in our neighborhood."*

This may or may not be true; however, because there is usually a lack of communication among neighbors most people don't know what is actually occurring in their own community. Neighborhood Watch encourages neighbors to talk to each other.

*"If someone really wants to break in, they will."*

This probably true; however, most burglars will choose the easiest target, such as a house with an unlocked door or open window

### **Feel like you don't have the time?**

You don't have to take on a leadership role. Offer to make a few phone calls or touch base with your neighbors and show that you support the effort. As you go about your daily routines, observe your surroundings. It only takes a moment to notice something suspicious and record and report what you saw. Every effort helps.

### **Feel like you don't have the skills?**

You don't have to have special training to be observant. You will know when something isn't right in your neighborhood.

### **Feel like you're still a newcomer to the neighborhood?**

Neighborhood Watch is a wonderful way to get to know your neighbors and find people who share your interests. Knowing your neighbors also makes it easier to recognize strangers who may not have legitimate business on your street.