

# *Building the Pacific Area Neighborhood Watch Program*



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The prevention of crime, particularly crime involving residential neighborhoods, is a responsibility that must be shared equally by law enforcement and private citizens. The fact is, *the impact on crime prevention by law enforcement alone is minimal when compared with the power of private citizens working with law enforcement and with each other.* NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH (NW) is based on this concept of cooperation, and nationwide statistics prove that it works. When citizens take positive steps to secure their property and neighbors learn how to report suspicious activity around their homes, burglary and related offenses decrease dramatically.

The Neighborhood Watch program is one of the most effective means available for keeping crime out of our neighborhoods. It relies on the best crime fighting tool ever invented – a good neighbor. When neighbors work together with law enforcement, it creates one of the best crime fighting teams around.

Make your community safer from criminals by starting a Neighborhood Watch. Goals of the Neighborhood Watch include:

- Developing strong neighbor relations whereby neighbors watch out for each other
- Educating neighbors to recognize suspicious activity and take appropriate action
- Implementing other crime deterrents such as basic home security measures
- Contributing to the reduction of residential burglaries and other neighborhood crime through information exchange that include crime prevention programs and literature.

## **Roles of individuals in Neighborhood Watch**

Growing the Neighborhood Watch Program and its effectiveness is a key objective of the LAPD Pacific Division and everyone has a roll to play:

- **Senior Block Captain (SrBC)** – A goal of the NW program in the Pacific area (PACNW) is to have at least one Senior Block Captain per Senior Lead Officer (SLO), or Basic Car area. The Pacific Division has 8 SLOs/Basic Car Areas. The role of the Senior Block Captain is to be the primary lead mentor and cultivator of Neighborhood Watch groups and Block Captains in a SLO/Basic Car area. The SrBC will act as the key contact for the SLO and will pass on important community information to the Block Captains and Super Block Captains in each SLO/Basic Car area. SrBCs take responsibility to work throughout his/her Basic Car area to recruit and mentor Super Block Captains and Block Captains.
- **Super Block Captain (SBC)** – A goal of the PACNW program is to have at least one Super Block Captain in each LAPD Reporting District (RD) in the Pacific Area. An RD encompasses several blocks within a Basic Car area. As some RDs are larger than others, having multiple SBCs in an RD to work together is ideal. Super Block Captains take responsibility to work throughout his/her RD to recruit and mentor Block Captains with a goal of locating new Block Captains and working to establish a NW group on every block.

- **Block Captain/Contact (BC)**– A goal of the PACNW program is to have a NW group on every block in the Pacific Area. Block Captains take responsibility to organize their block group, organize block meetings and connections, serve as the key contact for his/her block with their SLO, and help educate and inform their neighbors/NW participants about area crime and crime prevention and reporting tips. Meetings for all Pacific Area Block Captains are held at the LAPD Pacific Area station throughout the year. Contact your SLO, SBC or SrBC for details.
- **NW Participants** – One of the best ways to promote crime prevention is by participating in Neighborhood Watch. When people become aware of what’s going on in the neighborhood, everyone will benefit.

Participation in a Neighborhood Watch program does not require a lot of time. Through the program, neighbors will get to know each and will become more aware of suspicious cars, persons or circumstances that might be a danger and require calling the police. The security of a home and the level of attentiveness of each resident is entirely up to them.

The following guidelines have been successful in reducing the potential for crime:

- Get to know your neighbors by name and be able to identify them and their vehicles.
- Make your home as burglar-resistant as possible. Mark all property for identification. Make a Home Inventory of your property including property description, serial numbers and photos.
- Be observant of neighbors’ homes, especially when they are vacant or the owners are out of town.
- Write down license plate numbers and descriptions of suspicious-looking persons and vehicles in the neighborhood, and report them to the police. It is also a good idea to notify your BC and SLO of the activity after the police have been notified.
- Educate children in crime prevention techniques and teach them to respect the law and police officers.

## **Reporting Suspicious Activity**

Anything that seems slightly “out of place” or is occurring at an unusual time of day could be criminal activity.

Report all suspicious activity. Do not worry about bothering the police or about being embarrassed if your suspicions prove to be unfounded. Think instead about what could happen if you don’t act.

*Important note: Serving as a Block Captain does not give you any law enforcement authority. You are simply the person who facilitates the unity of the group, distributes information, and coordinates activities. The job you are doing is important and appreciated by the LAPD Pacific Area Officers and your neighbors, but it carries no authority.*