



Public Safety Newsletter

February 18, 2010

Dear Community Friends:

Block Watch Networking to reduce crime.

There is a great interest in the Community for forming a Block Watch network to share information regarding the threat of crime, such as burglary and auto prowl/auto theft. This is a great way to alert a larger number of residents to the patterns of crime in their neighborhood and enable citizens to outsmart the criminals. Let's keep the focus of this effort purely on preventing crime.

There are some keys steps to reducing crime in your neighborhood:

Step Number 1: Make your home as secure as possible.

Between 30-40% of the burglaries are done with no-force, the victims leave a door or window unlocked. Everyone needs to use the locks and security they already have and look for ways to increase their home security to make the burglars work harder to get into their homes. The same thing is true for car prowls and auto thefts. The Crime Prevention Coordinator covers all of this at the Block Watch meeting and there is crime prevention resource information on SPD web-page: www.seattle.gov/police/precincts/southwest/prevention.htm.

Doors Tips

- ❑ Exterior door should be solid core or metal.
- ❑ Quality, heavy-duty, deadbolt lock with a one-inch throw bolt.
- ❑ Use a heavy-duty, strike plate with 3-inch screws to penetrate into the 2x4 door frame.

Step Number 2: Trusted Neighbors are watching each other's homes.

A Block Watch meeting is the best way to start a mutual crime watch. Neighbors agree to call each other and the Police regarding suspicious persons and suspicious activity. An active Block Watch develops an excellent communication network between neighbors and reports suspicious persons and suspicious vehicles with license plate numbers to the Police. Call the Crime Prevention Coordinator to schedule a Block Watch meeting.

Step Number 3: Connecting the Block Watch groups.

It is time to enlarge the Block Watch by contacting neighbors on other blocks north, south, east and west of your block. Most burglaries occur in the day time hours. The neighbors that are at home or working from home should take time to walk their block looking for suspicious persons engaged in suspicious activity. One Block Watch member programmed his cell phone with all the neighbors names and phones by placing a "N" (for neighbor and house number) in front their names, that way they were all grouped together. Encourage neighboring blocks to organize a Block Watch and refer them to the Crime Prevention Coordinator to help them with a Block Watch meeting.

Step Number 4: Local Community Councils involvement.

Several community councils have taken an active interest in crime prevention. They are in the process of recruiting a Block Captain for every block. Some Block Captains are asked to cover two blocks until another person is recruited for the position. The Crime Prevention Coordinator is willing to meet with community councils and assist them in the process of making Block Watch the center piece of their organization.

Key Safety Tips

- ❑ Post a "No Solicitors" sign on your door.
- ❑ Do not open your door to strangers, no matter what they say.
- ❑ Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- ❑ Make your home look and sound occupied: use timers on inside lamps, use motion sensors or keep front and back porch lights on all night and place a radio near door/window tuned to a talk show.

Resources To Keep You Informed

- ❑ Police Blotter, <http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/>
- ❑ Subscribe to SPD: Crime Blotter <http://feeds.feedburner.com/SeattlePoliceSouthwestPrecinct>
- ❑ Seattle Police Department main web page
- ❑ <http://www.seattle.gov/police/>
- ❑ Southwest Precinct Web-page
- ❑ <http://www.seattle.gov/police/Precincts/Southwest/default.htm>
- ❑ Seattle Police Crime Statistics <http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/crime/stats.htm>

For More Information Call: Benjamin Kinlow, Crime Prevention Coordinator, (206) 684-7724 or email benjamin.kinlow@seattle.gov. Check out www.seattle.gov/police/precincts/southwest/prevention.htm