

LIVINGSTON PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Willie Graves
Sheriff



WARNING



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

OUR NEIGHBORS ARE WATCHING
TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY
TO OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH is a program based upon community involvement. It is neighbors helping neighbors. **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH** is similar to a church in that it can only be as strong and effective as its members are willing to make it. As with anything worthwhile you have to put forth an effort, for you will get only what you put in and no more. The fact that you expressed an interest in **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH** is proof that you are ready to take an active role in fighting crime in your community. With your help *WE CAN DO IT.*

LIVINGSTON PARISH SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Willie Graves'.

Willie Graves
Sheriff

THE GROWING NEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

It is a fact of life that relationships in many of today's communities have become less personal than they were years ago.

With both parents working, the once familiar sight of families visiting with each other on front porches while keeping a watchful eye on children and activities in neighborhoods is a rarity in most communities today.

It is a fact that law enforcement would rather work with citizens to prevent crime than spend time and manpower investigating it after it occurs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. *Get to know each other in the neighborhood.*
2. *Ask neighbors to watch for suspicious activity when the home is vacant.*
3. *Organize block parent and block watch groups to assist children, the elderly and other especially vulnerable persons if they appear to be distressed, in danger, or lost.*
4. *Meet in neighborhood groups with trained crime prevention officers to discuss needs and crime prevention strategies.*
5. *Develop neighborhood (fan) or telephone tree systems for quickly alerting each other about criminal activity in the area.*
6. *Encourage the development of signals for use in adjacent residences when some needs help.*
7. *Arrange for ongoing programs where crime prevention experts can present home and neighborhood security tips at regularly scheduled meetings.*
8. *Identify the areas of participation with decals and metal road signs warning:*

**THIS IS A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH AREA
SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY WILL BE REPORTED
TO OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY**

IS YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD READY TO RESIST CRIME?

As anyone whose home has been burglarized, the shock and helpless anger accompanying the discovery that an intruder has entered one's home will not easily be forgotten. The damage may be minimal or major, the losses slight or catastrophic.

The incident may or may not have involved injury to a family member, yet one hard fact remains ... the burglar won again and has no doubt vanished, leaving no real clue to lead to his arrest.

Chances are good that a home burglarized today is located in a neighborhood where one vital prevention tool is missing, ***AN ACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH.***

HOW NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH WORKS

Citizen involvement is the answer to crime reduction. The prevention of crime particularly crime involving residential neighborhoods is a responsibility that must be shared equally by law enforcement and private citizens. Where there is a Neighborhood Watch area, there shows a drop in crime.

**STARTING
A
NEIGHBORHOOD
WATCH**



STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

COORDINATOR

The coordinator's job is crucial to the success of your program. This may be just the right job for a retiree or other individual who has extra time at home.

The coordinator's responsibilities include:

- *Expanding the program and maintaining a current list of participants and neighborhood residents including names, addresses, home and work telephone numbers, and vehicle descriptions.*
- *Acting as liaison between watch members, law enforcement officers, civic groups, and block captains.*
- *Arranging neighborhood crime prevention training programs.*
- *Obtaining and distributing crime prevention materials such as stickers and signs.*
- *Encouraging participation in "Operation Identification," a nationwide program in which personal property is marked indelibly with unique I.D. numbers to permit positive I.D. of valuables lost or stolen.*

BLOCK CAPTAIN

Block captains should be designated for every 10-15 homes and they should be directly involved with their immediate neighbors.

The block captain's responsibilities are:

- *Acting as liaison between block residents and the coordinator.*
- *Establishing a "telephone chain" by compiling and distributing a current list of names and telephone numbers of block participants.*
- *Visiting and inviting new residents to join neighborhood watch, notifying them of meetings and training sessions.*
- *Establishing the Operation I.D. Program.*
- *Contacting each neighbor as often as possible to discuss possible crime problems, needs for assistance, and suggestions for program improvement.*

DEVELOPING CITIZEN AWARENESS THROUGH CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Monthly meetings of your neighborhood group should be utilized for programs to develop citizen awareness and proper response to suspected or actual criminal activity. Speakers from law enforcement as well as from a wide range of community organizations are valuable resources for this training.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- **RECOGNIZING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**

- **DESCRIBING AND REPORTING EVENTS, VEHICLES, AND
PERSONS**

- **HOME SECURITY INSPECTIONS**

- **HOME SECURITY MEASURES**

- **PHONE SECURITY**

- **CONFRONTATION WITH INTRUDERS**

RECOGNIZING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

BE ALERT

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

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO INVESTIGATE A SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY OR APPREHEND A PERSON COMMITTING A CRIME.

CALL THE SHERIFF’S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

INCIDENTS THAT MAY INDICATE POSSIBLE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND SHOULD BE REPORTED ARE:

- *Continuous repair operations at a non-business location. (Stolen Property Being Altered)*
- *Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or unoccupied residence. (Burglary or Vandalism)*
- *Unusual noises, such as gunshots, screaming, or dogs barking continuously. (Burglary, Assault or Rape)*
- *Sound of breaking glass. (Burglary or Vandalism)*
- *A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms. (Person May Be Injured, Under the Influence of Drugs or Otherwise Needing Medical Attention)*

TIME and **ACCURACY** are crucial in reporting crime or suspicious events. Use your law enforcement agency’s emergency number (9-1-1) to report **LIFE-THREATENING** incidents or a crime in progress.

9-1-1 gives the dispatcher the name, address, and phone number from where the call originates. The dispatcher will ask the party calling for their name, address, and phone number.

Use non-emergency number **(225) 686-2241** for crimes that have already occurred.

Your call could save a life, prevent an injury, or stop a crime.

Your physical address should be easily identified from the street and not obscured by landscaping.

SUSPICIOUS PERSONS

Obviously not every stranger who comes into a neighborhood is a criminal. Legitimate door-to-door sales and repair persons appear in residential areas frequently.

Occasionally, however, criminals disguise themselves as these workers; therefore, it is important to be alert to the activities of all non-residents.

CALL THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IF YOU SEE:

- *Someone going door-to-door in a residential area, especially if one or more goes to the rear of the residence or loiters in front of an unoccupied house or a closed business. (Burglary)*
- *Someone forcing entrance or entering an unoccupied home. (Burglary Theft or Trespassing)*
- *Someone running, especially if carrying something of value or carrying unwrapped property at an unusual hour. (Fleeing the Scene of a Crime)*
- *Someone screaming. (Rape or Assault)*
- *Someone loitering in cars or parking areas. (Car Theft)*
- *Someone loitering around schools, parks, or secluded areas. (Sex Offenders)*
- *Someone offering items for sale at a very low price. (Selling Stolen Goods)*
- *Someone loitering or driving through a neighborhood several times or appearing as a delivery person with a wrong address. (Burglary)*
- *Heavy traffic to and from a residence, particularly if it occurs on a daily basis. (Drug Activity, Vice, Fencing Activity)*

SUSPICIOUS VEHICLES

Vehicles in the following situations may be involved in crimes and should be reported.

- *Slow moving, without lights, following aimless course in any location, including residential streets, schools, and playgrounds. (Burglary, Drug Activity, or Sex Offenders)*
- *Parked or occupied, containing one or more persons, especially at an unusual hour. (Lookouts for a Burglary or Robbery)*
- *Abandoned in your neighborhood. (Stolen Vehicle)*
- *Containing weapons. (Criminal Activities)*
- *Someone, especially a female or juvenile being forced into a vehicle. (Kidnapping, Assault, Attempted Rape)*
- *Business transactions taking place in the vehicle, especially around schools or parks. (Sale of Stolen Items or Drug Activity)*
- *Someone attempting to forcibly enter the car, especially in a parking lot. (Theft of Car or It's Contents)*
- *Persons detaching mechanical parts or accessories from the vehicle. (Theft or Vandalism)*
- *Objects being thrown from a vehicle. (Disposing of Contraband)*

DESCRIBING A REPORTING OF EVENTS

VEHICLES AND PERSONS

Practicing to develop skill in providing a quick, accurate description is an excellent Neighborhood Watch meeting activity. In attempting to describe events, vehicles, or persons, write down the details of what you have observed while they are still fresh in your mind so your descriptions to law enforcement officials will be as accurate as possible.

DESCRIBING EVENTS

When describing events, write down:

- *What happened.*
- *When it happened.*
- *Where it occurred. (Note the nearest cross street, home address or landmark in relationship to the event.)*
- *Were injuries involved? (Be prepared to report visible or suspected personal injury. Be as specific as possible. This could save a life.)*
- *Were weapons involved? (This information, whether observed or suspected, is VITAL to responding officers.)*

DESCRIBING VEHICLES

When describing vehicles, write down:

- *Vehicle license number and state, make, and type of vehicle, color, approximate age.*
- *Special designs or unusual features, such as vinyl top, mag wheels, body damage, or paint jobs.*
- *Direction of travel.*

DESCRIBING PERSONS

In preparing descriptions of persons it is important to write down the following:

- *Sex*
- *Race*
- *Age*
- *Height*
- *Weight*
- *Hair; i.e. color, length, etc.*
- *Facial hair; i.e. beard, mustache, goatee, etc.*
- *Identifying body marks; i.e. scars, tattoos, etc.*
- *Physical disabilities; i.e. limps, one-arm, etc.*
- *Clothing; i.e., hat, shirt, jacket, pants, shoes, socks, etc.*

HOME SECURITY INSPECTIONS

One of the most effective ways to educate Neighborhood Watch participants to protect their homes is to arrange for detailed security inspections. Your crime prevention officer can assist you in this effort and can provide watch members with home security inspection checklists.

HOME SECURITY MEASURES

You must be aware of the potential risk of crime in your home in order to prevent it. First, remember that the key factor in most crimes is opportunity. If criminals can't get at it, they can't take it. Then follow a regular plan of home security to deter the potential criminal or other intruder.

- *Use a timer or photoelectric cell that automatically turns a light on at dusk, particularly if you are going to be away at that time.*
- *Leave a radio on with the volume low.*
- *Always close and lock garage doors.*
- *Secure all obvious points of entry (doors, windows) to your home. Pretend you are the burglar. Stand outside your home and plan how you would get in, then install secure locks on all doors and windows.*
- *Lock up all ladders, ropes, or tools that could help a burglar gain entry.*
- *Keep all shrubbery trimmed near your doors and windows. (Don't provide concealment or climbing platforms for the burglar.)*
- *Brightly illuminate all entrances.*
- *Keep grass cut.*
- *Empty your mailbox.*
- *Keep extra keys out of sight and in a safe place. (Never hide keys outside.)*
- *Avoid displaying valuable items near windows.*
- *Never leave a note on your door.*
- *Start a buddy system with your neighbors in order to watch each other's homes.*

When leaving home for several days, call the Sheriff's Office and speak with Deputy Jackie Lockhart. Give her your name, address, and phone number. Tell her how long you are going to be away and where you or your key holder can be contacted.

- *Leave a key with someone you know so they can check the house periodically.*

- *Consider asking friends or relatives to live in your home while you are gone.*
- *Leave a car in the driveway.*
- *Ask your neighbors to put trash in your can.*

Despite precautions, if intruders are determined to enter, they will. However, burglars usually seek the easiest target and you can take steps to make your home less vulnerable.

TELEPHONE SECURITY

DAILY TELEPHONE SECURITY

- *Never give personal information (name, age, address, etc.) to a stranger on the telephone;*
- *Never give your social security number, driver's license number, or credit card number to telemarketers, to someone whom you do not know, or to whom you did not call;*
- *Never say that you are home alone or let a stranger on the telephone know when you will or will not be home;*
- *Teach children old enough to be left alone to never tell a stranger who telephones that parents are gone. Teach them to say, "My mom can't come to the phone now. May I take a message?"*
- *Instruct babysitters to never tell anyone who calls that they are alone with children;*
- *If you have an answering machine, your message should never say that you are not at home. Your message should say that you are on the other line or that you are unable to answer the phone;*
- *Have caller I.D. installed on your telephone with the Privacy Directory feature that will not allow unknown calls to be put through without first being identified. You may then opt to answer the phone;*
- *If there is an emergency and you are unable to stay on the phone, dial 9-1-1 and leave the line open. 9-1-1 dispatch will have your name and address and will be able to hear any conversations or other noise through the open line.*
- *Cordless phone conversations can be monitored by scanners designed for this purpose, and can also be heard on other cordless phones that are on the same frequency. It is a good idea to have at least one secure line in your home for conversations of importance;*
- *If you receive an obscene or harassing phone call, never talk to the individual making the call, just hang up.*

WHEN PLANNING A TRIP

- *Consider having your telephone "put on vacation." (Notify the telephone company approximately two weeks before your trip, and arrangements can be*

made for an operator or a recording to state that your telephone is temporarily out of order each time it rings);

- *Use “call forwarding” if this feature is available to you. (Call forwarding can give callers the impression that residents are home when they are actually away, by transferring your incoming calls to another telephone number.)*

CONFRONTATIONS WITH INTRUDERS

Develop the habit of surveying your home as you approach it. If you note evidence that someone has broken in, **DO NOT ENTER**. Go to the nearest phone and call the Sheriff's Office.

Should you confront a burglar, the first rule is ***GET OUT OF HIS WAY***. **NEVER** get between a burglar and the exit. **NEVER** try to stop the burglar; it may cost you your life.

If you are in your home and someone is prowling outside, make it appear that several people are at home.

If someone should enter your bedroom while you are in bed, pretend that you are asleep as long as he does not come near you.

PROGRAMS AND GOALS

- **Home Security Inspections**
- **Citizen Patrols**
- **Victim Assistance Programs**
- **Operation Identification**
- **Safe Houses for Children**
- **Triad Seminars** (*Seniors make capable leaders and more eyes*)
- **Project Porch Light** (*Blue Light*)
- **Crime Stoppers** (*Someone knows what happened*)
- **Seasonal Crime Prevention Tips**
- **Telephone Trees**
- **Mobilizing Scanner Owners**
- **Beautification Projects**
- **Fire Prevention Programs**
- **Operation Fingerprint**
- **Fundraising**
- **Installation of Security Devices**
- **House Numbering Project**
- **Automobile Bumper Decal**
- **Warm Lines** (*Talking to kids*)
- **Natural Observers** (*Seniors, teens, utility, mailmen, U.P.S.*)
- **Map of Homes and Resident's Names**

BURGLARY PREVENTION CHECKLIST FOR HOMES

This checklist was designed to help you make a security survey of your own home.

The first purpose of a home security inspection is to identify features in your home or the daily routines of your family that might make your home an easy target for a burglar.

The security inspection should begin at your front door and should include an inspection of all your doors and windows, locks, lights, and landscaping. Each question on the checklist that you answer with an "X" or check in the second column indicates a security weakness or hazard with requires your attention.

If you would like advice and assistance in a thorough home security inspection, call the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office (225) 686-2241 or (800) 443-7681.

BURGLARY PREVENTION CHECKLIST

DOORS

1. Are all outside doors in the house metal or solid wood construction? Yes___ No___
2. Are door frames strong enough and tight enough to prevent forcing or spreading? Yes___ No___
3. Are door hinges protected from removal from outside? Yes___ No___
4. Are there windows in any door or within 40-inches of the locks? Yes___ No___
5. Are all door locks adequate and in good repair? Yes___ No___
6. Are strikes and strike plates adequate and properly installed? Yes___ No___
7. Can the locking mechanism be reached through a mail slot, delivery port or pet entrance at a doorway? Yes___ No___
8. Is there a screen or storm door with an adequate lock? Yes___ No___
9. Are all entrances lighted with at least a 40-watt bulb? Yes___ No___
10. Can front entrance be observed from street or public area? Yes___ No___
11. Does porch or landscaping offer concealment from view of street? Yes___ No___
12. If there is a sliding door, is the sliding panel secured from being lifted out of track? Yes___ No___
13. Is Charley-bar or key operated auxiliary lock used on sliding glass door? Yes___ No___

ENTRANCES FROM GARAGE AND BASEMENT

14. Are all entrances to living quarters from garage and basement of metal or solid wood construction? Yes___ No___
15. Does door from garage to living quarters have lock adequate for exterior entrance? Yes___ No___
16. Does door from basement to living quarters have an adequate lock operated from living quarters side? Yes___ No___

WINDOWS

17. Do all windows have adequate locks in operating condition? Yes___ No___
18. Do windows have screens or storm windows that lock from inside? Yes___ No___

19. Do any windows open onto areas that may be hazardous or offer special risk to burglary? Yes ___ No ___
20. Do windows that open to hazardous areas have security screens or grills? Yes ___ No ___
21. Is exterior adequately lighted at all window areas? Yes ___ No ___
22. Is exterior areas of windows free from concealing structure or landscaping? Yes ___ No ___
23. Are trees and shrubbery kept trimmed back from upper floor windows? Yes ___ No ___
24. Are ladders kept outside the house where they are accessible? Yes ___ No ___

GARAGE DOORS AND WINDOWS

25. Is automobile entrance door to garage equipped with adequate locking device? Yes ___ No ___
26. Is garage door kept closed and locked at all times? Yes ___ No ___
27. Are garage windows secured adequately from ground floor windows? Yes ___ No ___
28. Is outside utility entrance to garage as secure as required for any ground floor entrance? Yes ___ No ___
29. Are tools and ladders kept in garage? Yes ___ No ___
30. Are all garage doors lighted on the outside by at least a 40-watt bulb? Yes ___ No ___