



## Minnesota Crime Prevention Association's Crime Prevention Tips

The MCPA strives to bring current information regarding prevention topics to its members. Please use these prevention tips to promote safety to the citizens of your community. These tips are great for brochures, newsletters, e-mails, etc.

### **Topic:            Neighborhood Crime Watch**

Neighborhood Crime Watch is a cooperative effort between the local law enforcement agency and individual neighborhoods. Neighborhood Crime Watch is simply you and your neighbors watching out for one another. This begins with getting to know each other. Otherwise, how can you tell a neighbor from a stranger?

It is important that citizens become the eyes and ears of the police by reporting suspicious activity that is not a part of the neighborhood's routine. This is explained at an initial Neighborhood Crime Watch meeting along with the minimal criteria for the program:

- 1) Active participation of at least 50% of the Watch area residents
- 2) Participation in Operation Identification
- 3) Meetings at least twice a year (one educational, one social on [National Night Out](#))

What's in it for the citizens? There is a greater awareness of crime and improved home security and personal safety in areas that actively participate in Neighborhood Crime Watch. Exposure to crime prevention techniques and special events such as National Night Out enhances a citizen's ability to reduce opportunities for criminal acts. Enhanced reporting of suspicious activity makes residents more aware of who belongs in their neighborhood and are more inclined to report suspicious persons and activities to the police.

Neighborhood Crime Watch signs serve as a warning to potential criminals that residents are concerned about crime and will call the police when suspicious activity is observed. This program promotes neighborliness by encouraging residents to get to know and interact with their neighbors, including exchanging information concerning vacation plans, vehicles belonging to their household, etc. It also encourages people to be observant of their neighborhood and to attend meetings designed to strengthen neighborhood safety and security. People feel safest, or at least more comfortable, in settings in which they are familiar.

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