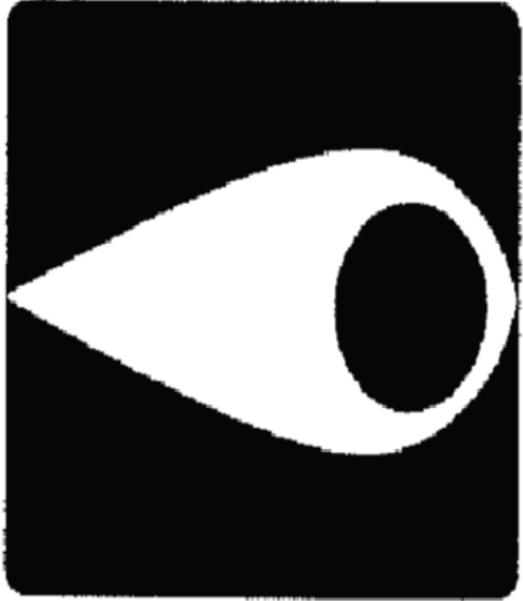


**WARNING**



COMMUNITY  
WATCH

This area observed by Community Watch citizens

# Starting A Community Watch





# Community Watch

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## Community Watch

Community Watch is a crime prevention program which enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities.

It involves:

- Neighbors getting to know each other and working in programs of mutual assistance to prevent crime, and;
- Citizens being trained to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhoods.

### Why Start a Community Watch?

Law enforcement officers cannot be on every corner, so citizen involvement is essential to combat crime.

You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your community.

By cooperating with each other and the police, people can help fight crime in their community in the most effective way—before it happens!



The North Carolina Community Watch Association

Once you have set up your Community Watch Program, conducted security checks, participated in Operation Identification and erected signs, you may want to consider joining the North Carolina Community Watch Association.

The association is made up of concerned citizens like yourself who want to share their program ideas with other Community Watches statewide. You may join as an individual or as a Community Watch. Membership dues are tax deductible.

For more information contact:

North Carolina Community Watch Association  
[www.nccwa.org](http://www.nccwa.org)

Or

NC Governor's Crime Commission  
[www.ncgccd.org](http://www.ncgccd.org)

Register your organization with USAOnWatch and receive a free tool kit.  
[www.usaonwatch.org](http://www.usaonwatch.org)

The police can use answers to as many of these questions as possible. Please remember that wrong information is worse than no information at all. Answer only those questions that you are sure of.

1. How many were there? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What did they do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What did they say?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What did they take? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which way did they go? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Were there any other witnesses?  
Name and addresses.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is there any other information you feel is important?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Community Watch Works

The goal of Community Watch is to give potential criminals the feeling that everyone in the community is watching their every move and will report them to law enforcement.

Across North Carolina, communities are working together to secure their homes, mark their valuables, identify drug dealers, develop child safety programs, clean up their neighborhoods and improve the environment where their children and families live.

Every law enforcement agency knows that when people care enough to get involved, crime will not flourish. Community Watch works when people get involved and stay involved.

## Community Watch Activities

Typically, a Community Watch program will start with activities which deter residential burglary, security surveys, Operation ID, putting up signs, etc. These activities are important because they deter home burglaries and build a sense of immediate accomplishment.

## Security Surveys

Don't have an "open house" when it comes to burglars.

Conducting a security survey on your home will help you identify weak points that may help a burglar. By eliminating these weak points, you improve your protection.

### Operation Identification

A successful Operation Identification program helps deter burglars, assist in the arrest and prosecution of criminals and facilitates the return of stolen property.

Encourage residents to engrave their driver's license number (preceded by the letter "NCDL") on their personal property. This, coupled with Operation Identification decals on doors and windows, warns "would-be" burglars that valuables are marked.

Your local Crime Prevention Officer may be able to supply you with an engraver, or you may want to purchase an engraver for use by members of your Community Watch.

You may also want to list all your valuables and major possessions for future use in the event of theft or loss.

### Other Community Watch Activities

There are a number of other crime prevention programs your Community Watch can do to promote a safer community. Following the home security activities, the community should collectively identify other concerns in their areas and discuss ways to address them.

While your law enforcement agency will not necessarily be involved with all community projects, they may serve as a valuable resource in recommending a plan of action, speakers, or providing data.

### Vehicle Description

What make:

---

What year:

---

Body style (2 door, convertible, etc.):

---

What color:

---

Identify dents, scratches:

---

License numbers, State of issue or identifying colors:

---

## Suspect Description

Sex \_\_\_ Race \_\_\_ Age \_\_\_ Height \_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_ Hair \_\_\_

	Yes	No
▪ Teeth (missing):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Color of eyes:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Glasses:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Moustache, beard, or sideburns:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Complexion:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Hat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Shirt:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Coat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Tie:		
▪ Pants and Shoes:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Tattoos, amputations, scars or marks:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Speech impediments or accents:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Distinguished gait or lump:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Rings, bracelets, necklaces, or earrings:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Weapon (handguns, rifle, knife, etc.):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Organizing a Community Watch

### First Step

Contact your local police or sheriff's department about setting up a Community Watch. They will assist you with materials and technical advice.

### Second Step

Schedule a community meeting in a home, church, community building, volunteer fire department, or other location.

### Third Step

Schedule a law enforcement officer to speak at your meeting about "Starting a Community Watch Program and Crime Prevention Techniques at Home". Most law enforcement agencies have crime prevention officers.

### Fourth Step

Write every resident in the community, inviting them to the meeting. Two or three weeks before your meeting, deliver the letters door-to-door when most people are at home.

### Fifth Step

Draw a large map of all the streets and houses in your community. If necessary, cruise your neighborhood by car and draw your map that way, or obtain a map from your local city government offices.

### Sixth Step

One week before the meeting, again go to every home in the area. Remind them that the meeting is one week

away, and ask if there is anything you can do to help them attend. Remember, there is no substitute for hand-delivering the letters and your reminder. When your neighbors see how hard you are working, they will be more likely to attend the meeting.

**Seventh Step**

Arrive in plenty of time. As people come, thank them and usher them in. Introduce people, and encourage neighbors to sit together and to become acquainted. When everyone has arrived, go to the front of the room and introduce yourself and the law enforcement official. Then, have the neighbor sitting closest to you stand up, introduce him or herself, any family and their street. Have the next person in line give the same information, and so on.

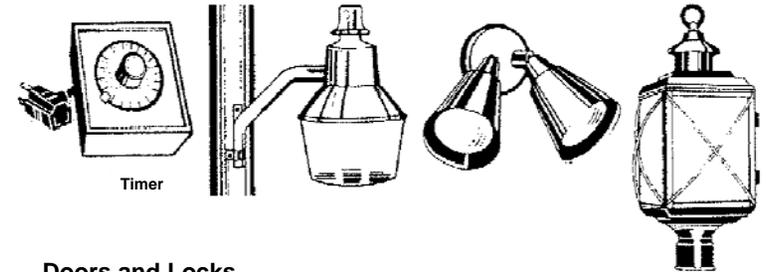
**Eighth Step**

After everyone has been introduced, ask the law enforcement official to give the presentation. Pass out paper and pencils so your neighbors can take notes. Make sure that everyone understands the program completely. The Community Watch program can be effective only when everyone knows what he or she must do. Make available any printed information on Community Watch.

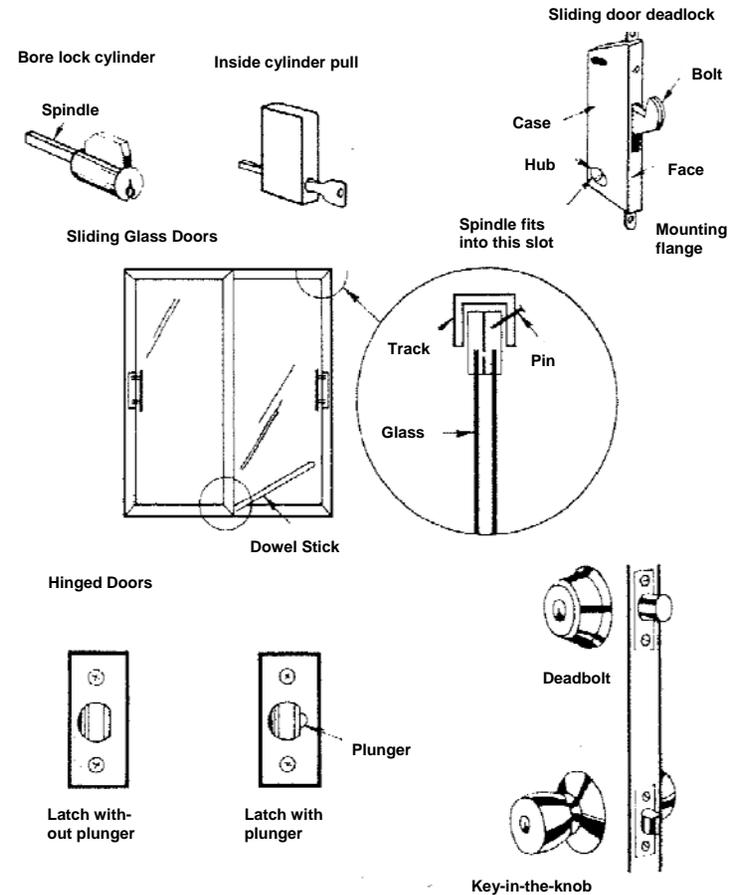
**Ninth Step**

Get a complete list of names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses from everyone taking part in the program. Also get a list of special concerns for the disabled, elderly, and children home alone.

**Lights**

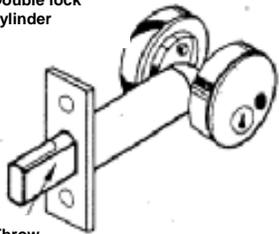


**Doors and Locks**

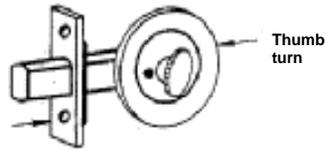


## Locks for Hinged Doors

Double lock cylinder



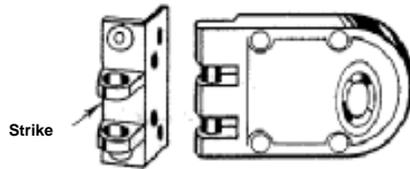
Strike plate



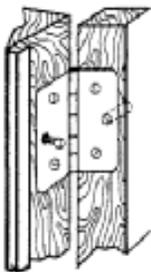
Thumb turn

1" Throw

Special care must be taken to allow for emergency exits. Occupants must have access to keys.

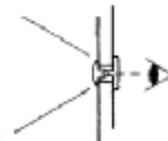
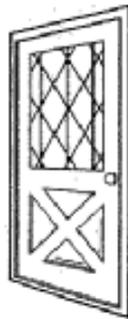


Strike



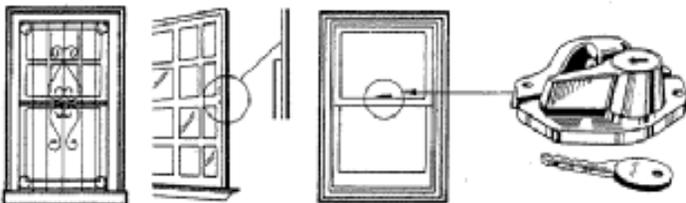
Headless screw

Insert headless screw on either side, allowing it to protrude approximately 1/4".



Wide Angle Viewer

## Windows



## Tenth Step

Select the type of signs and window stickers necessary for high visibility in the community. Establish a cost for each household and collect or plan to collect the funds. Your local police or sheriff's department can assist you in ordering the materials.

## Eleventh Step

Schedule the Crime Prevention Officer to return to the community to make volunteer security inspections of all the homes participating in the program. Decide the best days and times so the officer can use his most time effectively. Residents should complete Appendix I: "Burglary Prevention Checklist for Home".

## Twelfth Step

Elect your permanent Community Watch Chairperson. This person is responsible for communicating with local law enforcement officials and the volunteer leaders of each block in your community called "Block Captains". Your Chairperson will head your entire program, so choose wisely.

Just how effective your Community Watch is depends greatly upon who you select as your leader. Your Chairperson should be an outgoing person because he or she will be talking to many strangers, neighbors, and law enforcement officials.

## Thirteenth Step

Recruit volunteers to serve as Block Captains. These people serve as leaders for their blocks in the neighborhood, and they pass information from their permanent Chairman to their blocks and vice versa.

To get a volunteer for each block in the neighborhood, go to your community map hanging in the front of the room. Point to each block and ask for a person living on that block to serve as a block captain.

#### **Fourteenth Step**

Schedule a second meeting for the entire community for the following month. Initially, monthly meetings should be used to promote maximum participation and keep everyone informed about crime prevention subjects. You may wish to meet less often, depending on your program.

#### **Fifteenth Step**

Thank everyone for coming and tell them they will hear from the Block Captains soon. Ask the Chairperson and Block Captains to stay a little longer.

Have each Captain write down his or her name, address, e-mail address, and phone number on a piece of paper. These sheets plus your map go to the permanent Chairperson. Your leaders should then set up a time to meet so that they can put Community Watch into action.

#### **Sixteenth Step**

You have done a good job and can take pride in the fact that you have initiated a program in your community which will change everyone's lives for the better!

- |   | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b>                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 31. Do you have a description of other valuable property that does not have a number?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. Do you avoid unnecessary display or publicity of your valuables?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. Have you told your family what to do if they discover a burglar breaking in or already in the house?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. Have you told your family to leave the house undisturbed and call the sheriff or police if they discover a burglary has been committed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

This checklist was designed to help you see that you are not inviting a burglary by having an "open house".

If you would like professional advice, assistance, and a home security inspection, call your local law enforcement agency.

Take a critical look at your home security every three to four months. Don't become lax—crime prevention is a continuous process.

**When You Go On A Trip****Yes No**

21. Do you stop all deliveries or arrange for neighbors to pick up papers, milk, mail, packages?
22. Do you notify your Block Captain?
23. Do you notify your sheriff or police?
24. Do you leave some shades up so the house doesn't look deserted?
25. Do you arrange to keep your lawn and garden in shape?
26. Do you have any light timers or burglar alarms?

**Safe Practices**

27. Do you plan so that you do not need to "hide" a key under the door mat?
28. Do you keep cash and other valuables in a bank?
29. Do you keep a list of all valuable property in two safe places?
30. Do you have a list of the serial numbers of your watches, cameras, typewriters, and similar items?

**Gathering and Distributing Vital Information**

The Chairperson and the Block Captains designate a weekend when each Captain will visit every neighbor on the block. These visits should be completed as soon after the meeting as possible. Neighbors will be encouraged when they see such quick action.

From each household, the Block Captain obtains the following information:

- Names and ages of family members
- Address
- Home and work phone numbers
- Colors, makes, models, and license plate numbers of household vehicles, plus any vehicles they occasionally borrow from their employers or from visiting relatives
- Who has dogs
- Work and school hours
- Scheduled deliveries
- Special concerns (disabled, elderly, children at home alone, etc.)
- Dates for vacations or trips anytime the neighbor is going to be away from home for an extended period of time so that a House Watch can be set up.
- E-mail addresses

- Phone number to use in an emergency situation when no one is home, example: cell phone number
- Confirm dates for security check of their home by a local law enforcement officer

The completed checklists are taken back to the Chairperson. Information about vehicles is placed on a map of the area. On the other side of your map, you may wish to include a "Suspect and Vehicle Description" form (See Appendix II). Copies of the map are provided to each Block Captain for distribution to every home in the neighborhood. These maps will help neighbors recognize vehicles which don't belong in the community.

- |  | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b>                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. Do you use locks that allow you to lock a window that is partly open?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. In high hazard locations, do you use bars or ornamental grille?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Are you as careful of basement and second floor windows as you are of those on the first floor?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Have you made it more difficult for the burglar by locking up your ladder and avoiding trellises that can be used as a ladder or similar aids to climbing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Garage**

- |   |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 17. Do you lock your garage door at night?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Do you lock your garage when you are away from home?                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Do you have good secure locks on the garage doors and windows?                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Do you lock your car and take the keys out even when it is parked in your garage? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |   | <b>Yes</b>               | <b>No</b>                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5. Do you use chain locks or other auxiliary locks on all outside doors?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Do the doors without cylinder locks have a heavy bolt or similar secure device that can be operated only From the side?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Can all of your doors (basement, porch, French balcony) be securely locked?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Do your basement doors have locks that allow you to isolate that part of your house?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Are your locks all in good working condition?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Do you know everyone who has a key to your house? (Or are there still some in possession of previous owners and their employees and friends?) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Windows**

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11. Are your window locks properly and securely mounted? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Do you keep your windows locked when they are shut?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## **Duties of Community Watch Leaders and Law Enforcement**

### **Community Watch Chairperson Role**

1. Make arrangements for meetings and crime prevention training programs.
2. Report to Block Captains all information received from your Crime Prevention Officer.
3. Receive and report all information from Block Captains or members to the Crime Prevention Officer.
4. Furnish every member of the program with an up-to-date list of names, addresses, phone numbers, and vehicle information of all residents in the community.
5. Furnish every member with an up-to-date list of senior citizens and a list of agencies available to help these people in an emergency.
6. Keep in touch with your Crime Prevention Officer.

### **Block Captains Role**

1. Assist the Chairperson in passing information to and from members of the program on your block.
2. Keep in touch with the Chairperson.

### **Law Enforcement Officer's Role**

1. Keep the Community Watch Chairperson informed about any new materials. Attend meetings in the community and share with the people information about burglars working in and around the area.

2. Survey homes or businesses at the request of the owners and suggest ways to better secure their property.
3. Identify and check out any license number reported by a member of a Community Watch program. Report findings to the Chairperson of the program.
4. Report to the Chairperson of the program (in writing) as often as possible showing all break-ins or attempted break-ins in the area and any information about a vehicle used.
5. Provide up-to-date training seminars on other types of Crime Prevention: ID Theft, Gang Awareness, Terrorism Awareness, etc.

### Duties of Community Watch Members

1. Engrave your possessions with your North Carolina driver's license number and make a written inventory. Take photographs of jewelry, silver, antiques, art, and any additional items you do not engrave. Keep a copy of your inventory and photographs in a deposit box or somewhere away from your home. Update inventory regularly.
2. Watch out for all vehicles, not just vans and trucks. Passenger cars, expensive and inexpensive, are also used by thieves. Be prepared to obtain the license number of a suspicious vehicle. Keep a pencil and paper in the car. If you see a prowling car in your neighborhood, take down a general description of the vehicle and its occupants. Mark the location, time and date for general reference should this information be needed again. Ask your children to be alert for suspicious vehicles while they are out and around the neighborhood.

## Appendix I

### Burglary Prevention Checklist for Homes

Survey your home with this checklist. Every "no" checkmark shows a weak point that may help a burglar. As you eliminate the "no" checks, you improve your protection.

Go through this list carefully and systematically. Look over this situation in the daytime, when most house burglars work, as well as at night.

Remember this checklist only points out your weak points. You are not protected until these are corrected. Complying with these suggestions will not, of course, make you property burglar proof, but will certainly improve your protection.

<b>Doors</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Are your wooden doors solid or reinforced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are the locks on your most used outside doors of the cylinder type?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are they of either the deadlocking or jimmy-proof type?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are your doors' locks protected from attack by breaking out glass or a panel of light wood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix II, which should also be on the back of your community map will help in gathering and relaying information.

Remember, your job is to report the crime. The responsibility for apprehending criminals belongs to the police.

And once you have reported the crime, stick to it.

- It pays to prosecute. Three-fourths of the criminals who are prosecuted are found guilty.
- Being a witness in court is not as much trouble as you think. Many communities have special programs to help victims and witnesses with transportation, day care services, and scheduling of their cases. For further information on crime victim rights and services, write:

**Department of Crime Control  
and Public Safety  
Victim's Compensation Services  
4703 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4703**

**1-800-826-6200**

**WWW.NCCRIMECONTROL.ORG**

3. Patrol the area whenever you leave and return home. Street activity is a very good deterrent to crime.
4. Tell your Block Captain when you are having work done or when you are going away from home, even for a short trip, so they can keep an eye on your home while away. Become familiar with your neighbors' cars. Any car that does not belong in your neighborhood should be considered a possible suspect.
5. Report suspicious vehicles to your Block Captains. Do not call law enforcement unless you are reporting an actual crime, suspected crime, or threatening situation.
6. Do not give out any information about your home or family over the phone. Do not tell strangers when you will be away. Be suspicious of anyone you do not know. Do not display your name on a mailbox or plaque. Burglars can phone ahead to make sure your house is empty by simply looking up your name in the phone book. However, do put large house numbers on the mailbox. This helps in locating your home in an emergency situation.
7. Do not advertise you are living alone. Single women should list their names in the phone directory with only the first and middle initial.
8. Never open your door to strangers. Install a peephole so you can properly identify visitors before opening your door. Do not be afraid to demand proper identification. Put peepholes in your door for your small children.
9. Do not put a name tag on your house keys. Do not give keys to repairmen. Separate auto keys and house keys to avoid duplications.

Never leave a key under a doormat, in the mailbox, or hanging from a nail. Burglars know all the “secret hiding places”.

10. Install double cylinder deadbolt locks on all exterior doors six inches above or below the present locks. If you use the deadbolt lock when you are home, leave the key in the lock to prevent your house from becoming a firetrap. Sliding glass doors should be secured with a pin-type locking device or “Charlie bar”. Window gates and special window locks that can be opened only with a key are effective; however, if you install these locks, leave the key in them when you are home. Do not let your house become a firetrap while trying to protect it from burglars.
11. Keep garage doors closed and locked. An empty garage is a reasonably good sign the homeowner is away. Lock up any tools that may be used for prying or breaking.
12. While away, make your home look and sound occupied. To create the appearance that someone is home, use a timer to turn lights on and off at normal times. A radio playing adds to the illusion that the home is occupied. Your home’s exterior should be well lit. Do not leave blind spots where burglars can hide. When in doubt, a thief usually looks for an easier target.
13. Keep a dog if you can. A barking dog is still one of the most effective burglar alarms. Burglars would rather find another house than hassle with an angry dog.
14. Community Watch is a family program. Young people can be very helpful in making your Community Watch work effectively. Involve them in

all phases of your program. Also, encourage them to take part in crime prevention activities like those sponsored by 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, D.E.C.A, Youth Crime Watch, School Crime Watch, or other youth groups.

15. Stay active! Stay in touch!

## Reporting a Crime

Sounds easy? It is. Unfortunately only about half of all crimes are ever reported. Too bad, because law enforcement cannot do anything if they do not know what happened. They say information from people like you is the key to solving many crimes.

Even an anonymous tip is better than no report at all. So do not hesitate! Follow this rule: If you see a crime, suspect a crime, or a threatening situation call law enforcement—fast—so that they can act—fast. The longer you wait, the harder it is to catch the criminal.

When reporting a crime, be sure to give the following information:

1. Your name (optional)
2. Your location (optional)
3. What crime is being committed?
4. Where is the crime occurring?
5. Who is involved?
6. What do they look like?
7. What does the vehicle look like?