

## **What is a Neighborhood Watch?**

A Neighborhood Watch is a group of neighbors who are willing to communicate with each other and pass along crime and non-crime related neighborhood information. The groups are educated in crime prevention, trained to observe suspicious activity and report the activity, to each other and the police.

It is a fact of life that relationships in many of today's communities have become less personal than they were years ago. Families are more transient, children have more activities that take them and their parents away from home, and there are more families 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 the neighborhood is a rarity in most communities today. This trend away from personal contact in the neighborhood and the decrease in time families spend at home are two of the essential ingredients that make communities ripe for crimes of opportunity, such as burglary.

### **Neighborhood Watch is:**

- A community – police crime prevention partnership.
- Neighbors coming together to help each other not become victims of crime.
- Neighbors coming together to address community issues.
- Learning and practicing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design - Surveying and upgrading, if necessary, your home security and lighting.
- Learning to identify suspicious activity and reporting the activity to other neighbors and the police.
- Members all live on the same street or within line of sight, generally 5 – 25 homes per group.

### **Neighborhood Watch is not:**

- Citizens armed patrol.
- Vigilante groups.
- Encouraging residents to take risks to prevent crimes.
- A program that guarantees that a crime will not occur in a neighborhood.
- A political group.
- A neighborhood association or neighborhood organization. -  
A law enforcement entity.

## **Crime Prevention Officer**

Each Patrol Division has one Crime Prevention Officer (CPO).

The Crime Prevention Officer's job is to monitor the progress of the whole Neighborhood/Business Watch Program on a division level as well as other crime prevention programs and initiatives. The CPO or their designee will speaker at engagements that are requested by members of the community or Neighborhood/Business Watch functions.

The CPO's are available to train your group in Crime Prevention, Workplace Violence, Robbery Prevention, Personal Safety, Shoplift Prevention, Narcotics, and other topics. If you are interested in a specific topic not listed contact the CPO and they can arrange a special topic seminar.

Throughout this manual you will be asked to contact your CPO should you have any questions or need information on other community programs.

## **Starting a Neighborhood Watch**

Starting a Neighborhood Watch is easy. The following steps must be taken when starting your group:

1. Decide on the number of households your watch program can effectively cover. Keep in mind the geographical layout of the neighborhood and the ease with which neighbors can observe each other's property. Some groups will involve all the houses on one street facing each other while other groups may be organized around alleys, greenbelts, or cul-de-sacs. Most groups are around 5 - 25 households.
2. Visit with your neighbors and explain that you are starting a Neighborhood Watch program.
3. Determine what would be the most convenient day and time for them to attend a start-up meeting. In order to have maximum attendance, the most convenient day and time for the majority must be taken into consideration. It would be more convenient to have the meeting in one of the homes in the neighborhood, if that home were large enough to comfortably accommodate the number of people expected to attend.
4. Contact your Crime Prevention Officer (CPO) to see when they or their designee will be able to attend the start-up meeting. It is very important to contact your CPO as soon as possible as some dates are booked up to a month in advance.
5. Once a date and time has been coordinated with the Crime Prevention Officer, you will need to develop a meeting announcement flier, make

copies, and distribute them to neighbors. When the flier is delivered, stress the importance of having at least one adult from each household attend the meeting. A sample flier is included as Appendix 2.

6. Block Captain(s) will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding and an application for a criminal background check; and attend the initial Block Captain Training. Please contact your Divisional Crime Prevention Officer for information on the next training class.
7. Have your start-up meeting.

## Requirements for Starting and Maintaining Your Group

In order for your group to be recognized by the Department you must meet the following criteria:

1. Your group must meet at least twice a year and report your meeting dates to the Crime Prevention Officer. This is a requirement, and failure to do so will result in your removal from the program.
2. Your group should complete Property Inventory sheets. The block captain and Police Department do not maintain those records. Property Inventory sheet attached as Appendix 6.
3. Please contact your Divisional Crime Prevention Officer for information how to obtain Neighborhood/Business Watch Street Signs.



Once your group has been started, your group needs to continue to meet at least twice a year. These meetings can be as formal or informal as you like including block parties, cookouts, or ice cream socials. An officer does not need to attend every meeting; however, to maintain your Neighborhood Watch Group status your meetings need to be reported to your Crime Prevention Officer.

The National Association of Town Watch sponsors an annual event, National Night Out, on the first Tuesday of each August. It is a unique crime prevention event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. Its purpose is to heighten crime prevention awareness; generate support for local anti-crime programs; strengthen neighborhood spirit and police / community relations. Every National Night Out, Local Neighborhood Watch Groups and other crime prevention organizations across the city hold block parties, cookouts, ice cream socials and rallies. This event does count as a one of your yearly meetings so we encourage

you to participate in whatever manner you choose. If you have a meeting, be sure to notify the CPO for your area. If you want your CPO or other police officer to attend, notify your CPO two weeks in advance. Their schedules get booked up very rapidly. There may also be a National Night Out event that occurs on a citywide level. You can encourage your groups to attend this type of gathering as well.

## **Managing the Neighborhood Watch Start-Up Meeting**

The first meeting is extremely important for your group. The officer attending has been specially trained in starting a neighborhood watch. He / She will provide your group with valuable information about what a neighborhood watch is and how they function.

Because of the amount of information being covered at the first meeting expect the meeting to last approximately one hour. The length will vary depending upon the amount of questions asked by your group. The more involved your group members become in the meeting the more you will learn. The following is a list of recommendations for managing the first meeting.

1. Allow time prior to the actual meeting for neighbors to meet and socialize.
2. Start the meeting on time.
3. Introduce yourself as the Block Captain and introduce any other Block Captain.
4. Introduce the Police Department Representative.
5. The representative will present a wealth of information to your group including:
  - Expectations of Neighborhood Watch
  - Importance of participation
  - Requirements of program
6. Closing remarks by Block Captain.
7. After the Block Captain Position is determined, fill out the application and MOU (memorandum of understanding) and give that to the representative. They will turn it in and add you to the database.

## **Neighborhood Watch Participant Responsibilities**

### **Block Captain Responsibilities:**

1. A Block Captain applicant must not have any prior felony convictions, must not be a registered sex offender and must not be actively involved in criminal activities. The final approval rests with the Division Commander.
2. Ensure your group meets at least twice a year by coordinating the meetings, cookouts, block parties, etc. and report the meeting dates to the police representative. (see *Appendix 8*)
3. Attend at least two block captain meetings per year. E-mail, web pages, or newsletters will announce the quarterly meetings.
4. Develop a block map and roster for your group that includes names, addresses, and phone numbers and e-mails for each group member. Telephone trees can help expedite emergency information among your neighbors. Neighborhoods a chart (which is continuously updated) that includes the names and phone numbers of all members. Each individual listed on the tree knows whom he is to contact should emergency or other important information need to be disseminated in a hurry. (see *Appendix 9 and 10*)
5. Develop an alert plan reflecting the name and phone number of each household - e-mail distribution list or phone tree for notification of suspicious activity. (see *Appendix 9 and 10*)
6. Greet new neighbors and invite them to join the program.
7. Inform and distribute to group members any crime related information received from the police department representative.
8. Be the liaison between your Neighborhood Watch group and the CPO.
9. Sign application and MoU and return to the Divisional Crime Prevention Officer.
10. You are responsible to maintain you and your co-captain's accurate information with the CPO, i.e. mail and phone numbers.
11. Attend one training per calendar year

**Group Members Responsibilities:**

1. Be alert to suspicious activities in your neighborhood.

2. Notify the Block Captain if your contact information changes.
3. Learn neighbors' names and be able to identify their vehicles and other vehicles usually in your neighborhood.
4. Keep an up to date block map, roster, and other important group information in an accessible and secure location.
5. Implement security measures suggested by your CPO or Block Captain.
6. Notify police and block captain of any suspicious activity.
7. **DO NOT TAKE ANY PERSONAL RISK** to prevent a crime or execute an arrest. It is more important to have a healthy, injury free witness whose recollection of the incident is not tainted by fear, anxiety, or pain. The safety and well being of every person in the group is most important.
8. Attend the Neighborhood Watch meetings.

### **Reporting Suspicious Activity:**

Neighborhood Watch is founded on the principle that you and your group members know what activity is normal in your neighborhood. A police officer occasionally patrolling the area is not going to be able to identify a strange person or car as quickly as a resident is. To have a successful neighborhood watch the participants must learn to recognize what activities and behaviors are normal within their groups in order to observe what is abnormal.

When reporting suspicious activity that is after-the-fact (a cold report) or one that is of a non-emergency nature, use the non-emergency number 444-7000. Be aware there is a good chance you will be put on hold using this number. Do not use 911 for a non-emergency calls, as you will only be transferred to the nonemergency number. See Appendix 1 for a phone list.

## **Home Security**

The CPO's are trained in the practice of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, CPTED for short. The concept of CPTED is that the environment can be manipulated to reduce the fear of and incidence of crime. For example how your yard is maintained, whether lights are on or off all may reduce the fear or incidence of crime.

In general, keep the exterior of your home clear of miscellaneous debris, tools, etc., that could be used by criminals to break into your home or used as weapons. Trim trees up 6' – 8' from bottom. Keep bushes trimmed down to ground level or below window height. Install and use 360 degree exterior lighting. Exterior doors should be solid core with door viewer and deadbolt lock. All windows should have a secondary device.

Do not automatically open your door to visitors. If you do not know the person, are not expecting them, or cannot verify their identity: do not open the door, even to talk to them.

Training is offered through CSPD in basic crime prevention and home security. Several security recommendations that could be implemented in your home will be made. These recommendations are general in nature. Due to the large number of neighborhood watch groups and participants in Colorado Springs the officer will not be able to look at every group members' home. After your group receives the information, if you have any specific questions, please contact your CPO. See Appendix 3 for a home survey and Appendix 4 for vacation checklist.



After conducting the home survey and upgrading your home security contact your home-owners insurance company. Some companies provide discounts to Neighborhood Watch participants.

### **Home Security Measures**

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 telephone and call the police or sheriff's department. Should you confront a burglar, the very first rule is: GET OUT OF HIS WAY!! Never get between a burglar and the exit, and never try to stop him. It may cost you your life!

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 THEY CAN'T GET AT IT, THEY CAN'T TAKE IT! Then...follow a regular plan of home security to deter the potential burglar or other intruder.

- Use a timer or photo electric cell that automatically turns a living room light on at dusk, particularly if you are going to be away at that time;
- Leave a radio on with the volume turned low when leaving home, even for short periods;
- Always close and lock garage doors;
- Secure automatic garage door transmitter in glove compartment of your car;
- Secure all obvious (and not so obvious) points of entry 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, preferably with vandal-proof fixtures;
- Keep your grass cut, your leaves raked, etc., to indicate a well cared for and occupied home;
- Empty your mailbox or arrange to have it emptied as soon as mail is delivered;
- Install new locks when moving into an apartment or previously owned home;
- Keep extra keys out of sight and in a safe place; never hide a key outside-most hiding places are obvious to burglars;
- Avoid displaying valuable items near windows with open drapes or shades;
- Never leave a note on the door explaining why you are not at home;
- Never leave doors or windows unlocked when leaving home;
- Display only your last name on your nameplate or mailbox;



- Start a "buddy system" with you neighbors in order to watch each other's homes; watch for "movers" or "repair people" at a house where no one is home.

### **When Leaving Home for Several Days**

- Don't cancel your paper or mail deliveries; ask that your neighbor pick them up every day;
- Leave a key with a friend or neighbor; ask that the house be checked periodically;
- Have the drapes periodically opened and closed; and have different lights turned on and off so the house appears occupied;
- Store all your valuables;
- Consider asking friends or relatives to live in your home while you are away;
- Leave a car in the driveway, or ask neighbors to park in it;
- Ask your neighbor to put some trash in your trash cans.

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

### **Telephone Security**

- Never give personal information (name, age, address, etc.) to a stranger on the telephone;
- Never let a stranger on the telephone know when you will or will not be home;
- Never let a stranger on the telephone know you are home alone; instruct babysitters never to tell anyone who calls that they are home alone with children;
- Teach children old enough to be left alone never to 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?"

- Credit card/Social Security #, etc. Do not give out a credit card or social security number to someone who you do not know or whom you did not call.

### **When Planning A Trip**

- Consider having your telephone "put on vacation." (Notify the telephone company approximately two weeks before your trip, and arrangements will 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 available in your area. (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. Your local phone company can provide you with further information).

### **Suspicious Persons**

Obviously, not every stranger who comes into a neighborhood is a criminal. Legitimate door-to-door sales and repair people 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 nonresidents. Law enforcement officials should be called to investigate persons in the following circumstances, who may be suspects in the crimes indicated:

- Going door to door in a residential area, especially if one or more goes to rear of residence or loiters in front of an unoccupied house or closed business (burglary);
- Forcing entrance or entering an unoccupied house (burglary, theft, or trespassing);
- Running, especially if carrying something of value or carrying unwrapped property at an unusual hour (fleeing the scene of a crime);
- Heavy traffic to and from a residence, particularly if it occurs on a daily basis (drug dealing, vice or fence operation);
- Screaming (rape or assault);
- Loitering around or peering into cars, especially in parking lots or on streets (car theft);
- Loitering around schools, parks or secluded areas (sex offender);

- Offering items for sale at a very low price (trying to sell stolen property);
- Loitering or driving through a neighborhood several times or appearing as delivery person with a wrong address (burglary).

### **Suspicious Vehicles**

Vehicles in the following situations MAY be involved in crimes and should be reported to authorities:

- Slow moving, without lights, following aimless course in any location, including residential streets, schools, and playgrounds (burglar, drug pusher, or sex offender);
- Parked or occupied, containing one or more persons, especially at an unusual hour (lookouts for a burglary or robbery);
- Parked by a business or unoccupied residence, being loaded with valuables (burglary or theft);
- Abandoned in your neighborhood (stolen car);
- Containing weapons (criminal activity);
- Someone, especially a female or juvenile, being forced into a vehicle (kidnapping, assault, or attempted rape);
- Business transactions taking place in it, especially around schools or parks (sale of stolen items or drugs);
- Persons detaching mechanical parts or accessories from it (theft or vandalism);
- Objects being thrown from it (disposing of contraband).

## **BUSINESS WATCH PROGRAM**

The Colorado Springs Police Department is working with the business community to reduce crime and the fear of crime by establishing a Business Watch Program. Business Watch has evolved from the very successful Neighborhood Watch Program with some modifications.

Business Watch is composed of a group of business people who join together with the police in a team effort to practice crime prevention. A Business Watch may be formed in a shopping center, among a row of street-front shops or within a single office building. One person will be needed to organize the first meeting. A coordinator will be chosen to be the liaison to the Police Department's Crime Prevention Officer. Reporting suspicious activity is the key feature of the program. We encourage these types of calls since they are a very effective way of preventing crime. Calls to the police do not place the caller in civil or criminal jeopardy. Business Watch does not require owners or employees to confront or apprehend criminals.

## **Robbery Prevention Strategies**

Keep your front doors and windows clear of signs and posters to allow natural surveillance, two way visibilities. Employees can see suspicious persons outside. Passers-by and police can see inside.

Keep the outside of your business well lit at night.

Make sure your cash register area is clearly visible to outside observers.

Practice good cash control. Keep a minimum amount of cash in your cash drawer and make regular drops into a safe. Advertise outside that you keep a minimal amount of cash in the register and that you will not accept large bills. Don't keep large bills under the cash drawer. If you don't have a safe, find a less obvious place to hide your extra cash until you go to the bank. Make bank deposits as often as possible and try to vary the times you make these deposits so that potential robbers cannot establish your routine. Carry cash in a variety of ways - a lunch sack, attaché case, flight bag, pocket, etc. Money bags are pretty obvious. Not only should you vary the times, but also the routes that you use to go to the bank. Make deposits as often as possible, never less than once a day.

Use a safe that the clerk cannot open alone or that requires two keys and post that fact conspicuously, including on the safe itself.

Use digital surveillance at your business to deter both from robberies and employee theft. Make it well known that surveillance cameras are in place and always have at least two clerks working at night.

Be alert for "customers" who seem to be glancing around the store while appearing to shop or browse through a magazine. Approach them and ask "May I help you find something?" or "Are you finding everything you need?" etc.

Watch for suspicious persons outside the business too. Such as people sitting in cars, people loitering, or other behavior not normal for the circumstances or environment.

If you see someone who is acting suspicious inside or outside, call the police to have them checked out. Consider locking the doors to your business if someone outside is behaving suspiciously until you know the police have checked them out and the situation is safe.

At opening time enter the store and check to see if it has been disturbed. Try to have two people perform the opening and closing of the business each day. Before closing check the office, back rooms and rest rooms to make sure no one is hiding inside.

Regarding door, keep side and back doors locked. Have employees use the main entrance, if possible. Place markers at the main entrances so that if robbed, employees can use this to help gauge the height of a robber as he leaves.

## **What to do during a Robbery**

Try to stay calm and don't make any sudden movements to upset the robber. Do exactly as you are told unless being instructed to do something that would endanger your life or safety. Do not resist unless you feel you are in imminent danger of abduction or death.

Activate your alarm ONLY if you can do so secretly and tell the robber about anything that might surprise him, such as someone who is expected to arrive soon. If you have to move or reach for something, tell the robber exactly what you are going to do and why.

Don't be a hero. It's better to lose your money than your life. If safe to do so, get a good look at the robber so you can describe him later. Give the robber time to leave and do not block his escape. Note his direction of travel when he leaves and try to get a description of his vehicle ONLY if you can do so without exposing yourself to harm.

**DO NOT** allow yourself to be abducted or moved to crime scene number two!

## **What to do after a Robbery**

Call 911 (police) immediately, even if you have already activated the alarm. Close the store and lock the doors. Do not allow anyone to enter other than emergency personnel and do not discuss the details of the robbery with witnesses or fellow

employees. Do not discuss the amount of money taken with anyone other than police. Please ask any witnesses to stay until police arrive and can get their information. If they can't stay, or if someone involved refuses to stay, get their names, phone numbers and addresses.

Do not touch anything that the robber may have touched. Block off areas where the robber was, if necessary. Try to recall as much as you can about the robber's appearance, height, weight, eye and hair color, as well as things like speech, mannerisms, jewelry, scars, tattoos, teeth, glasses, clothing, shoes, or anything else that may be able to help identify the individual who committed the crime.

Step outside the store when the police arrive so that they'll know the robber is gone and you are safe. Try to relax, calm down, and be as detailed as possible when answering the police officer's questions. Don't be afraid to ask questions of the police if you have any.

## **SHOPLIFT PREVENTION**

Good retailing practices are important:

### **Improving Store Layout and Displays:**

- Make it easy for staff to exercise effective surveillance.
- Exits should not be accessible without passing through checkout.
- Reduce or eliminate the number of exits, blind corners, recesses, alcoves, and hidden areas in the store.
- Monitor restrooms and changing rooms.
- Carefully place mirrors and surveillance equipment.
- Avoid displays that conceal goods and shoppers from view.
- Staff should be able to easily see down aisles from one end.
- Provide good, even lighting.
- Eliminate clutter and obstructions.
- Place goods away from entrances and exits.
- Reduce height of displays and reduce crowding near displays, especially of high risk items.
- Hot products should be moved to higher-security zones with more staff surveillance.
- Speed up check out to reduce congestion and waiting.

- Eliminate possibilities and opportunities for shoppers to exercise concealment of goods.

### **Tightening Stock Controls:**

- Helps managers detect shoplifting patterns.
- Inventory control procedures must allow shoplifting trends to be detected.
- Managers must be able to distinguish between shoplifting and employee theft.
- Without good inventory controls retailers will be unable to notice and immediately report shoplifts and employee thefts.

### **Improving Retail Security:**

- Standard security must make shoplift more difficult.
- Do not allow unaccompanied children in store.
- Establish clear rules for use of changing rooms and restrooms.
- Display only the cases in music and video store and only one shoe from a pair in shoe stores.
- Keep high value items in locked displays or use cable locks and security hangers.
- Provide baskets or something similar for shoppers to carry items to eliminate any excuse for putting items in their own bags or pockets.
- Check receipts against goods as shoppers exit the store.
- Require proof of purchase for refunds.
- Post warning notices on high risk merchandise.

### **Staffing:**

- Hire more and better-trained sales staff.
  - Makes it harder for shoplifters to operate.
- Hire store detectives.
  - Provides a deterrent, especially to shoplifters.
- Hire security guards.
  - Provides a deterrent to shoplifters who might otherwise believe they could escape if apprehended by sales staff.

### **Shoplifting Policies:**

- Using civil recovery.
  - Some deterrence; Provides retailers with the ability to recover some of the costs.
- Using informal police sanctions.
  - Unknown deterrent value; saves retailers, police, and the criminal justice system time.
- Establishing early warning systems.
  - Retailers communicate to one another when known shoplifters are present in the area.
  - Eliminates element of surprise that shoplifters rely on.
- Banning known shoplifters.
  - Alerts staff to their presence so they may ask them to leave.
  - Deters known shoplifters from entering store and may deter others.
  - Police may be notified and arrest banned subject for trespass.
- Launching public information campaigns.
  - Informs public about the harms of shoplifting.
  - Encourages people to report shoplifting.
  - Increases knowledge about the consequences of apprehension.
- Adhering to a zero tolerance policy.
  - 100% of shoplifters are arrested and subject to prosecution.

**Technology:**

- Installing and monitoring Closed Circuit Television (CCTV).
  - Increases surveillance abilities.
  - Useful in identifying offenders.
  - Provides evidence for prosecution.
- Using electronic article surveillance.
  - Detects shoplifters trying to leave the store with concealed goods. •  
Attaching ink tags to merchandise.
  - Removes the rewards of shoplifting by rendering the stolen goods unusable.

## **FRAUD PREVENTION**



### Credit Cards:

- Check signature on back.
- Ask to see identification.
- Make sure name on ID matches name on credit card and that signatures match.
- Do not accept cards that have been taped together.
- Do not hand the credit card back to the customer before you have received an approval code.

### Checks:

- Ask to see a photo ID.
  - **Write date of birth and driver's license number on check. The district attorney has to have this for prosecution.**
- Compare name on check with name on ID.
- Make sure signatures match.
- Make sure photo on ID matches the person using it.
- Verify funds with issuing bank on large amounts.
- Use a check verification system/machine.
- Obtain a fingerprint from persons paying via check.
- Never cash a check for anyone, **you are not a bank**
- For your information:
  - The district attorney is now contracting out all *insufficient funds* and *stop payment* cases to an independent company. ○ That phone number is **1-800-398-5065**

## **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) For Business**

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a set of design principles used to discourage crime. The concept is simple: Buildings and properties are designed to prevent damage from the force of the elements and natural disasters; they should also be designed to prevent crime.

CPTED principles are based on anticipating the thought processes of a potential offender, and creating an environment that discourages follow-through. CPTED

has the added advantage of creating a sense of security and well-being among employees and tenants.

When CPTED is put into practice, the resulting environment - including the building and its surroundings - will discourage or impede criminal behavior, and at the same time encourage honest citizens to keep a watchful eye.

### **The Four Principles of CPTED are**

Natural Surveillance

Natural Access Control

Territorial Reinforcement

Maintenance

Although these principles were developed for the design and construction of new buildings, the concepts can be applied to existing businesses as well.

### **Natural Surveillance**

Criminals do not like to be seen or recognized, so they will choose situations where they can hide and easily escape. Here are some ways to incorporate natural surveillance into a business environment.

Keep areas well lit. In particular, building entrances should be bright at all times and provide a clear line of sight from both inside and outside.

Eliminate hiding spots. Cut down hedges and remove trees, bushes, fences, dumpsters, etc. that create blind spots or hiding places.

Low, thorny hedges work well around windows, because they don't obstruct the view in or out, and they don't provide a comfortable place to hide.

Use Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to view areas without natural sight lines. Put up monitors in public areas so that visitors know they are being watched. The last thing a criminal wants to see when they enter a building is their own face on a security monitor.

The result: A potential offender should feel like they are being watched, and that the surroundings offer no easy escape routes.

### **Natural Access Control**

Criminals like to feel that they are in control. However, this sense of control can be denied by clearly marking the approaches to buildings and properties and channeling visitors into a defined area. Here are a few tips for creating natural access control:

Use maze entrances in public lobbies. The goal is to cut off straight-line access to a potential target, such as a bank teller or cashier. I'm not talking about barbed wire - even tension barriers that have to be jumped or navigated around can discourage the bad guys.

Use curbing and landscaping to direct automobile and foot traffic into a controlled, visible area.

The result: a criminal should never feel like they have the upper hand when approaching a facility.

### **Territorial Reinforcement**

The purpose of this principle is to create a clear distinction between public and private property. This is important for two reasons: Legitimate occupants have a sense of ownership and will notice, and even challenge, people who don't belong; intruders, on the other hand, have a harder time blending in. Here are some ways to implement territorial reinforcement:

Make sure receptionists have clear sightlines to all entrances, as well as the ability to quickly and discreetly call for help. A panic button that calls a central station or signals for help via an alarm light in a separate section of the building works well.

Make sure security signage is clearly visible at all entrances.

Implement a visitor badging system, and make sure that all visitors are properly escorted.

The result: Employees gain a feeling that "this is my space," while intruders are immediately put on the defensive.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance is related to territorial reinforcement. A well-maintained area sends the message that people notice and care about what happens in an area. This in turn discourages vandalism and other crimes. Security practitioners refer to the "Broken Windows Theory" - the idea that one broken window will entice vandals to break another. A vandalized area then becomes more inviting to higher levels of crime. Property should be well-maintained as a matter of safety as well as pride.

### **Target Hardening**

Target hardening is another element often mentioned in connection with CPTED. This simply means making a building more difficult to forcibly enter.

The use of deadbolt locks is one example of target hardening. To be effective, the locks should have hardened steel bolts extending at least one inch into the

door jamb. When deadbolts are installed on a wooden frame door, the screws that fasten the strikes should also penetrate at least one inch into the door frame.

Protective window films are another example of target hardening. Buildings with plate glass windows are vulnerable to "smash and grab" burglaries. But plate glass can stop a sledgehammer when a protective film, such as *ShatterGARD*, is properly installed.

## **Describing and Reporting of Events, Vehicles and Persons**

Practicing to develop skill in providing quick, accurate descriptions is an excellent **NEIGHBORHOOD/BUSINESS 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);
- Whether injuries are involved (Be prepared to report visible or suspected personal injury. Be as specific as possible - this could save a life!);
- Whether weapons are 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, and approximate age;
- Special designs or unusual features, such as vinyl top, mag wheels, body damage, pinstripes, etc.;

- Direction of travel.

### **Describing Persons**

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

- Sex;
- Race;
- Age;
- Height (estimated from eye contact level measured against your height);
- Weight;
- Hair (color and length);
- Hat;
- Facial Hair (beard/mustache);
- Shirt/tie;
- Coat/jacket;
- Trousers;
- Shoes;
- Any peculiar or distinguishable mannerisms, physical disabilities, disfigurements, scars or tattoos;
- Voice characteristics;
- Direction of movement.

### **Operation Identification (O.I.)**

Operational Identifications is the name given to a nationwide program of marking personal property indelibly with a unique identifying number to permit positive identification if the items are lost or stolen. Citizens marked property with a

distinguishing identification mark or number that will assist law enforcement officers with recovering and returning stolen property. Participation in Operation Identification is not mandatory for a Neighborhood Watch group however participation is **highly** recommended. Contact your CPO to check out the engravers.

## **Registered Sex Offender Information**

Most persons convicted of a sex offense must register with the local police department. How long the offender has to register depends on many different factors and laws. The public has a right to obtain the registration information. Information on Registered Sex Offenders can be obtained by going to Springspolice.com. On the left side, Click on "Sex Offender Registry Info."

## **Common Neighborhood Concerns**

### **Graffiti: Hotline Number : 634-5713**

Graffiti is defined as any writing, word, symbol, figure, design or other inscribed material written, sprayed, painted or otherwise applied to any exterior surface of a building, wall, fence, tree, sidewalk, curb or other permanently fixed object without the authority or consent of the property owner. Online tips are available at [www.graffitihurts.com](http://www.graffitihurts.com).

Code Enforcement primarily removes graffiti from Public Property. We are presently meeting our goal of removal from public property within 48 hours of reporting.

Studies prove that graffiti removed within 24-48 hours results in an almost 0% chance of reoccurrence, graffiti left for 30 days results in a 200% chance of reoccurrence.

City Code (9.6.606) requires private property owners to remove graffiti from their property within 10 days of notification. Code Officers are responding and advising them of their requirement. Patrol Officers, PSRs and ERTs should do the same.

Victims are encouraged to make a case report by Direct Line Reporting or Online Reporting.

We will help private property owners who are elderly, have extenuating circumstances or are constant victims.

### **Juvenile Loitering:**

The City of Colorado Springs does not have a curfew. However, there is a Juvenile Nighttime Loitering Ordinance. The ordinance states that it is, “unlawful for any person under the age of 18 to loiter or to aimlessly drive or ride about, on or about any street, avenue, highway, road, sidewalk, curb, gutter, parking lot, alley, vacant lot, park, playground, yard, building, place of amusement, or eating place, whether public or private, without the consent or permission of the owner or occupant thereof, during the hours ending at 6 a.m. and beginning at 12 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings, and beginning at 10 p.m. on Sunday night through Thursday night.” It is not a violation if the person under the age of 18 is accompanied by a parent, guardian or other adult person over the age of 21 years of age who is authorized by a parent or guardian of such juvenile to take the parent’s place for a designated period of time and purpose.

This ordinance does not prohibit juveniles from participating in legitimate activities. It does prohibit them from aimlessly wandering and hanging around. If you are concerned about a group of juveniles hanging around your neighborhood call the non-emergency number, 444-7000, and based on priority and availability an officer will be sent to investigate.

Parents also have a responsibility under the law. When parents knowingly permit their child to violate the ordinance, charges may be filed against the parents.

### **Motor Vehicle Theft:**

Motor vehicle thefts in the City have been on the rise. Unfortunately, many of these thefts have occurred with the keys in the car. Remember to always pocket your keys and lock your car doors even if “just for a minute” such as warming your car in the winter time, or paying for gas while the car is running.

### **Break-ins to Motor Vehicles (BMV)**

It’s important to removal ALL valuables or perceived valuables from your vehicle. Criminals target areas of opportunity. If your neighborhood removes these items from your vehicles you reduce the chance of criminal activity in your neighborhood. **Narcotic Complaints:**

If you have a narcotics complaint you have five options of reporting the information:

1. Call the non-emergency phone number, 444-7000, and an officer will be dispatched based on priority and availability.
2. Call the office of the narcotics street teams at 444-7766 Mon.-Fri.,

7a.m. to 4p.m. and ask to speak to a Detective from the Complaint Response Team.

3. File an Internet report by going to the CSPD web site and sending a detailed e-mail to the Vice, Narcotics, Intelligence team (VNI). (see Appendix 7 for detailed instructions)
4. Fill out a Drug Information Report, attached as Appendix 5, and FAX it to 578-6064 or mail it to CSPD, VNI Unit, 705 S. Nevada Ave, Colorado Springs, CO, 80903.



### **Traffic Violations:**

The number one concern voiced by the citizens of Colorado Springs is neighborhood traffic complaints. Most neighborhood violators are your neighbors. Neighborhood Watch encourages group members to be responsible for their neighborhoods. With that in mind, the Police Department has initiated several programs so community members can have an impact on traffic problems such as speeding, reckless driving, and stop light violators.

*SMART Trailer* – The SMART trailer is a self-contained radar unit that displays the vehicle speed to the driver. The unit does not take pictures so driver information is not available. The unit does record the average and high speeds, and counts the number of vehicles. Officers use the data from the trailer to evaluate the need for future traffic enforcement. The purpose of the trailer is to encourage voluntary -compliance of traffic laws.



*Traffic Complaint Form* – This is a report form that provides citizens with the opportunity to make a traffic complaint against a known driver or a vehicle identified with a license plate. These reports are available at any police station, on line at the department’s web page, [springspolice.com](http://springspolice.com) click on “forms and documents” then on “Form-Traffic Complaint”. The complainant has the option of requesting a warning be issued to the registered owner or a citation be issued to the driver provided the complainant can identify the driver and is willing to sign the complaint and testify in court against the violator. The final decision to issue a citation is always made by the investigating police officer. (see Appendix 7)

*Neighborhood Traffic Complaint Form* – This is a report form that provides citizens with the opportunity to make a neighborhood traffic complaint (i.e. speeders) with regard to reoccurring traffic problems in their neighborhood. A citizen simply telephones the respective police substation in their area and a front desk representative can take the complaint over the phone. This information is then forwarded to a supervisor, and then in turn is assigned to a police officer to



investigate. In addition, the SMART Trailer can be used as an additional tool to target and slow down speeders.

## **Other Community Partnership Programs**

The following list is only a small number of partnership programs available to the community. If you have any questions about these or other community partnerships contact the CPO for your division. See Appendix 1 for phone numbers.

Explorer Program – The Colorado Springs Police Explorer Program is open to local area teens aged 14 ½ to 20. Explorers learn law enforcement tactics, crime scene investigation, and can ride with officers after the age of 16. Explorers can participate in the program until one year after they turn 21 years of age. Several of our Officers started as Explorers.

Crime Free Multi-Housing – This is a crime prevention program for apartment communities which are similar to Neighborhood Watch. This is a partnership between the Colorado Springs Apartment Association and Police Department and the Crime Free Multi-Housing project. Apartment Communities can become certified as a Crime Free Multi-Housing Unit providing them with special privileges.

Crime Stoppers – Program that allows citizens to anonymously report suspects of crimes to the police. Detectives working the case will later follow-up these tips. This number will not get a response for an in progress call. Sometimes cash rewards are given. Call 634-STOP.



Handicap-Parking Enforcement – Volunteers are trained and commissioned to enforce handicapped parking violations. As a requirement, all handicap-parking volunteers are disabled in some manner that permits them to use the handicapped spaces.

Ride Along Program – Qualified community members may complete an application and ride with a police officer for half a shift. You may select specific officers, days or shifts. Approval is based on scheduling, manpower, and emergencies. Call the Division you wish to ride at for more information.

Senior Victim Assistance Team – This team is a group of senior volunteers who provide senior victims with immediate crisis intervention and support. They often respond at the request of police officers to help a victim of a crime or they may provide follow-up support and referrals.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) - The Colorado Springs Police Department believes in community partnership and transparency between us and the public we serve. For this reason the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed. The purpose of the CAC is to be a policy advisory group to provide informed, timely recommendations in support of Crime Prevention initiatives and any other appropriate issues involving the Colorado Springs Police Department. Each Police sub-station hosts a group for their division. If you would like to be part of this group please contact your divisional Crime Prevention Officer for more details

Community Animal Response Team (CART) - The City of Colorado Springs Office of Emergency Management, Colorado Springs Police Department, and Colorado Springs Fire Department have a Community Animal Response Team (CART). We are always looking for volunteers for the City CART to work with Equine/Large Animal and Small Animals/Pets. The volunteer personnel working for the CART may be called upon to assist during emergencies requiring rescue, evacuation and sheltering of horses and pets. Types of CART deployments may include Natural Disasters, Disease Outbreaks, Intentional Attacks, or any other emergency requiring large scale evacuations people who inevitably come with animals. CART meets regularly and members receive training on a regular basis. Animal Emergency Responders may be police, fire, animal control and citizen volunteers. City of Colorado Springs CART Contacts: CAPS (Community Advancing Public Safety), 444-7441; Office of Emergency Management, Director, 385-7229; or City CART Coordinator, 444-7276.

Volunteering - Join the CAPS (Community Advancing Public Safety) Team by volunteering in Colorado Springs' public safety agencies. Volunteer opportunities are available in the police and fire departments days, nights and weekends. Visit [www.springsCAPS.org](http://www.springsCAPS.org) to submit an online volunteer application or call 444-7441. Training is provided.

Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) - Citizens have come to expect that when they report an emergency, help will arrive immediately. During a large disaster, police, fire and medical responders may be overwhelmed and unable to assist you right away. CERT is a free course that provides citizens with basic training in disaster preparedness and response. People will learn how to help themselves, their families and their neighbors during and immediately following a disaster. Online registration is available at [www.springsgov.com](http://www.springsgov.com), then click on Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management for class dates and registration form. For more information, contact the Colorado Springs Office of Emergency Management at 719-385-5957 or [cert@springsgov.com](mailto:cert@springsgov.com).

**CSPD Division Contact Information**

**Falcon Division (North West)**  
7850 Goddard Street

**Gold Hill Division (South West)**  
955 West Moreno Avenue

Colorado Springs, CO 80920  
719 - 444-7240  
Crime Prevention 444-7246

Colorado Springs, CO 80905  
719 - 385-2100  
Crime Prevention 385-2117

**Sand Creek Division (South East)**

4125 Center Park Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80916  
719 - 444-7270  
Crime Prevention 444-7276

**Stetson Hills Division (North East)**

4110 Tutt Boulevard  
Colorado Springs, CO 80922  
719-444-3140  
Crime Prevention 444-3168



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