

## **WHAT IS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?**

As a result of increased violent crimes neighbors throughout the nation are banding together for protection against lawbreakers. With the approval and assistance of your local police department, residents provide each other mutual support in an effort to maintain safe and healthy neighborhoods.

## **HOW WIDESPREAD ARE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCHES?**

In 1972, the National Sheriff's Association established the national Neighborhood Watch program. Other similar programs include Citizen Crime Watch and Block Watch. Today more than 47 million people live in communities with active Neighborhood Watch programs. Approximately 85% of the nation's law enforcement agencies are participating in some type of Neighborhood Watch program to help local citizens fight crime and improve their local communities.

## **HOW EFFECTIVE ARE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS?**

Statistics compiled from neighborhoods throughout the US are demonstrating that the program works!

Examples include the following:

- \* The City of Decatur Police Department was able to seize a known "drug house" because of the active Neighborhood Watch program in that community.
- \* Burglary rates were cut in half in targeted areas in Seattle, Washington.
- \* Boston, Massachusetts had a 77% reduction in robberies once a community patrol was activated in a public housing development.

## **HOW DO YOU START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM?**

- 1) Contact your local police department and speak with the Community Relations representative about the process of activating the program.
- 2) Arrange an initial meeting by telephoning neighbors and distributing flyers by going door to door.

**THE CITY OF DECATUR POLICE DEPARTMENT STRONGLY  
RECOMMEND THAT EVERY CITIZEN OF DECATUR BECOME AND  
ACTIVE MEMBER OF A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM TO ENSURE  
A SAFER ENVIRONMENT FOR US ALL.**

# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GUIDELINES AND GOALS

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM:

- 1) BLOCK MEETINGS SHOULD BE HELD AT LEAST 3 TIMES A YEAR.
- 2) CLEAR AND CONCISE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN AN EFFORT TO BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE AND BROUGHT TOGETHER QUICKLY IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.
- 3) MEMBERS SHOULD MAKE A COMMITMENT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND TO WORK ON BEHALF OF EACH NEIGHBOR'S SAFETY AND WELL-BEING.
- 4) NEIGHBORHOOD OFFICERS, LIAISONS, AND BLOCK CAPTAINS MUST BE APPOINTED.
- 5) ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS MUST ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.

# BLOCK CAPTAIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

## **AS BLOCK CAPTAIN YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- 1) Assist neighborhood officers and liaisons with distributing or emailing newsletters, invitations, and planning neighborhood meetings and events.
- 2) Maintain a current listing of names, addresses, home and work numbers, vehicle type and color, owner of those vehicles.
- 3) Take reports from residents regarding criminal activity and suspicious activity and report this information to your neighborhood officer or liaison and this individual should report it to the police or community relations liaison. However if the criminal or suspicious act being reported or witnessed is an emergency please contact the police first by calling 911 and then contact your neighbors.
- 4) Notify police liaison, by resubmitting a current neighborhood contact form, of new residents who have moved into your area.
- 5) Recruit assistant block captains if needed.
- 6) At least one member of your neighborhood organization is strongly urged to participate in the City of Decatur Public Safety Academy class. For more details contact you Community Relations representative at (404) 370-4161.

## PARTICIPANT'S GUIDELINES

As a Neighborhood Watch participant you are required to:

- 1) Become acquainted with your neighbors. Learn their names and addresses and have the ability to identify them and their vehicles by sight.
- 2) Maintain your map or log that include names, addresses, and telephone numbers in an easily accessible location.
- 3) Regularly attend neighborhood meetings as these meetings will benefit you and members in your community.