

What is Neighborhood Watch?

The Neighborhood Watch Program was developed to bring together Law Enforcement teams and private citizens in a cooperative effort working together for the betterment of all our citizens. Much of the work is done by the committee chair people and the Neighborhood Watch Officer who is involved with the program. This is simply a program of neighbors watching out for each other. It is designed to enlist the active participation of citizens in cooperation with the police to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

The specific and primary purpose of the Los Banos Police Department and Neighborhood Watch Association is:

- To become acquainted with your neighbors.
- To work together to identify and solve problems in your area of our community.
- To help the police by being aware of and reporting any unusual activities as they occur.
- To report "abnormal" activity in your neighborhood.
- To implement crime prevention techniques to enhance home security.
- Not to apprehend suspects, leave that to the police. It is putting neighbors back into neighborhoods.
- To facilitate, maintain and improve communications between the citizens of Los Banos and the Los Banos Police Department by establishing and maintaining a liaison with the Los Banos Police Department and exchanging information on crime and crime prevention.
- To advance crime prevention concepts in the community by educating the public in the application of physical crime prevention techniques.
- To encourage participation in the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- To encourage citizen participation in all aspects of crime prevention through media exposure and personal appearances.
- To work together for the betterment of living conditions for all residents of Los Banos through participation in anti-crime and community services activities.

Los Banos Police Department information:

- Non emergency phone number 209-827-7070 ext. 0 to report a crime in progress or a non-emergency call for service.
- Emergency call for service dial 9-1-1
- Fax number 209-827-7085

Please call our anonymous tip line. The information you provide is completely confidential. Please report graffiti/suspicious activity.

**Thanks for your help!
209-827-7070 ext. 288**

NNWI **HOW TO START** **(AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY)** **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM**



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HOW TO START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

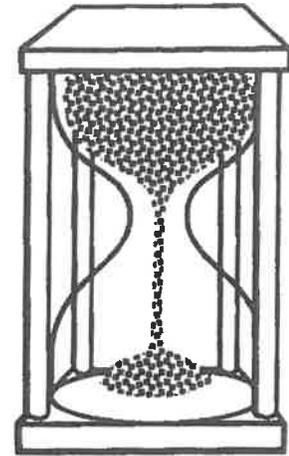
Starting a Neighborhood Watch program can seem like a huge task. Where do we begin? What kind of neighborhood? Who will be involved in it? How can interest be maintained? What materials are needed? What are the benefits of a Neighborhood Watch program?

All these, and more, are common questions you might ask when facing the challenge of starting a crime prevention program such as Neighborhood Watch. Here at the National Neighborhood Watch Institute, we are providing you a 16-page working guideline on **"How to Start (and Maintain a Healthy) Neighborhood Watch Program."**

The price: Your time in reading through it, and hopefully, taking action and starting up your own program. You are encouraged to use this manual, and pass it along to others to spread the word. The National Neighborhood Watch Institute charges \$3.00 per copy.

Here is how you start:

- 1** Determine if there is a need for and if there is an interest in a program in your city, town, condominium, home owners association or whatever size unit you wish to start. At a minimum, invite neighbors who have a fairly direct view of each other's houses or apartments. For a standard city block, this might include both sides of the street, corner houses that look down your block, and backyard neighbors when applicable. Remember our motto, **"We Look Out For Each Other!"** Don't get carried away! You want a small group of neighbors that you mutually trust — not a group of strangers too large to know each other by name.
- 2** Four weeks before the start-up meeting, visit your neighbors and explain that you are starting a NW program for your neighborhood. Get an indication from them of the best time, date and place for a meeting. Explain that this start-up meeting will have to be coordinated with the other neighbors and your local law enforcement agency. Ask about any crime concerns or other local issues they may have. They may also provide you with information on suspicious activity in the area.

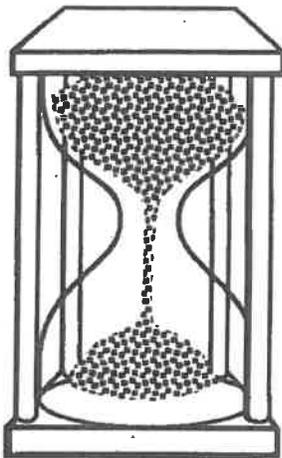


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- 3** Verbally inform each of them of the benefits of having such a program and that you will welcome them to the start-up meeting. Also explain that the start-up meeting will probably be a few weeks away. For best results hold the meeting in a home in the immediate neighborhood.



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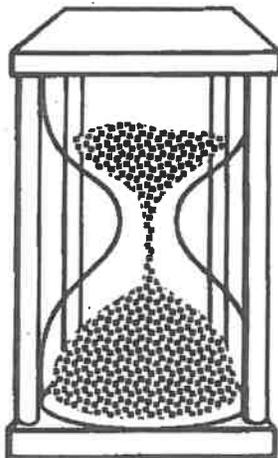
- 4** Three weeks before the meeting you should order:

- NNWI Participants' Handbooks
- NNWI Personal and Home Security Handbooks
- NNWI Family Data Sheets
- NNWI Telephone Tree Sheets
- NNWI Family Data Summary Sheets
- NNWI Block Maps
- Electric Engraver and
- NNWI Inventory Sheets

You may want to create some of your own items shown above, but at a cost of only a few cents each, you are far better off purchasing these from NNWI. The three handbooks are copyrighted and must not be reproduced. An order form

will be found on the back cover of this publication.

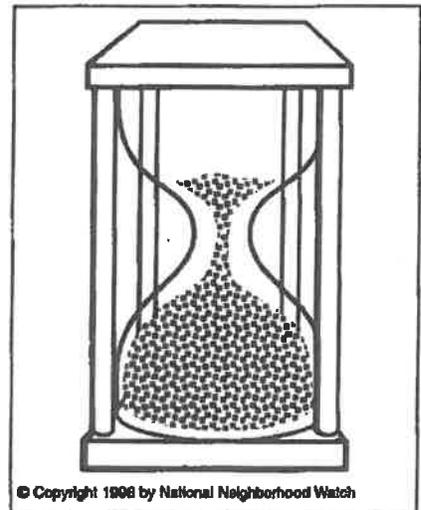
- 5** Give them a NNWI Family Data Sheet to complete prior to coming to the start-up meeting. (See *NNWI Family Data Sheet* or *sample on page 13.*)
- 6** After determining the best time and day of the week for the meeting, contact your local law enforcement representative to schedule a time with them to attend your start-up meeting. It is important to contact them at least two weeks in advance. This should be coordinated very early in this process. Schedule the officer to arrive a half hour after the meeting begins so that Block Captains can be elected and information about the program can be distributed. (See *First Start-up Meeting on page 5.*)
- 7** A week in advance of the meeting, give Participants a



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flyer with the day, date and time of the start-up meeting as well as the location and the name of their neighbor who will host the start-up

meeting. (See Meeting Announcement Flyer on page 12) Try to make personal contact with every potential member, and ask them to bring their completed NW Family Data Sheet to the meeting. Seek help from the neighbors you contact. They can provide folding chairs or refreshments, escort seniors to the meeting, or they can assist you with organizing and networking. Getting them involved early secures their commitment.



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- 8** Call and contact each prospective Participant two days in advance of the meeting to remind them of the meeting date, time and place. Remind them that refreshments will be served...turnout improves when refreshments are available.
- 9** If possible, collect the completed NNWI Family Data Sheets prior to the meeting. You probably will not collect them all so explain to the participants who have not completed their NNWI Family Data Sheets to

THE FIRST START-UP MEETING

When you have your neighbors at your first meeting you will want to motivate them and quickly turn them into active Participants in your Neighborhood Watch program. Here are some good guidelines:



- 1** Have refreshments, name tags and seating ready at least fifteen minutes before the meeting time.
- 2** Give your neighbors a chance to socialize a little before the meeting begins. For the start-up meeting, have extra NNWI Family Data Sheets available because someone will certainly arrive without theirs.
- 3** Prepare and review the Agenda. (See Meeting Agenda on page 7)
- 4** Have everyone introduce themselves, telling the group which dwelling they live in and say who the other non-attending occupants are by name, sex and age.

5 Ask the group to feel free to join in the discussion with their questions and comments. ***Don't be bashful.***

6 Pass out an attendance sheet where they can list their name and phone numbers — and ask them if they have changes to their NNWI Family Data Sheets. Assign someone to collect the attendance sheets and NNWI Family Data Sheets, and update the NNWI Family Data Summaries.

7 Arrange for copies of the NNWI Family Data Sheets (and Summaries) to be distributed to all **PARTICIPANTS, ONLY!!**

8 At either the first meeting or the first follow-up meeting, distribute the NNWI Window Warning Labels or Decals.

9 At the first meeting, elect a Block Captain or Watch Coordinator to interface with law enforcement and a Social Director to set up a social event within the next six weeks for the first follow-up meeting.

**Get
Everyone
Involved!**

FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

Consider having your first follow-up meeting within six weeks, with further follow-up meetings every three months. It takes effort to keep your Neighborhood Watch group going. Having gained the initial enthusiasm, keep it going by getting together periodically. Frequent meetings allow your neighbors a chance to become more familiar with one another. This makes it harder for a stranger to go undetected.

Make a strong effort to get the families in your neighborhood who are not already Participants to become involved.

If you did not already pass out the NNWI Window Warning labels or decals, do so at this meeting.

Make the time meaningful at the same time being considerate of your neighbor's time. Keep the meeting to 90 to 120 minutes in length.

A quarterly pot-luck based on the season of the year is a good excuse for the group to get together. It encourages the attitude exemplified in your street and window signs, **"We Look**

Out For Each Other!"

Use your Neighborhood Watch group to organize other activities such as tool exchanges, garage sales and community gardens. Help each other trim shrubbery, install lighting or smoke detectors, paint street numbers on the curb or hundreds of other community activities. Consider escorting seniors to the store with you and have them watching the neighborhood kids. **Get everyone involved in your neighborhood and improve the quality of life while protecting each other.** Check out the three pages of suggestions in "Keeping Your Neighborhood Watch Group Active" on pages 8 through 10 of this publication.

MEETING TOPICS

Our reason for existence, **"We Look Out For Each Other!"**, is best achieved by becoming better acquainted at regularly scheduled Neighborhood Watch meetings. These meetings better educate you and your neighbors about subjects that should be of concern to the group. These meetings also build better friendships. There are many resources that are available to your Neighborhood Watch group from the Federal, State and Local levels. Your local Crime Prevention Officer can offer you information on many topics, including:

- Personal Safety
- Self Defense
- Child Safety

- CPR and First Aid
- Gangs
- Drugs
- Vandalism Prevention
- Fire Prevention
- Victim-Witness Services
- Annoying Phone Calls
- Observations Skills
- Bicycle Safety
- Fraud and Con Games
- Larceny Prevention
- Safety Tips for Seniors
- Auto Safety
- Latchkey Kids
- ATM Precautions
- Car-Jacking
- Holiday Precautions
- Home Security
- Recognizing Substance Abuse
- Graffiti Protection

Form a committee to see what information is available. See if speakers or videotapes are available. Take an informal survey among your group and decide which are most important. Set priorities for which subjects will be discussed at which times. Try involving all members of your neighborhood, not just one or two from a dwelling, but the entire household.

Set out an agenda for each meeting, provide the dates and subjects of each meeting, print it out and distribute it to each Participant two weeks in advance of your meeting. Call all your participants to remind them two days before your meeting. Test your telephone tree for this purpose.

TYPICAL MEETING AGENDA

A typical meeting agenda should include:

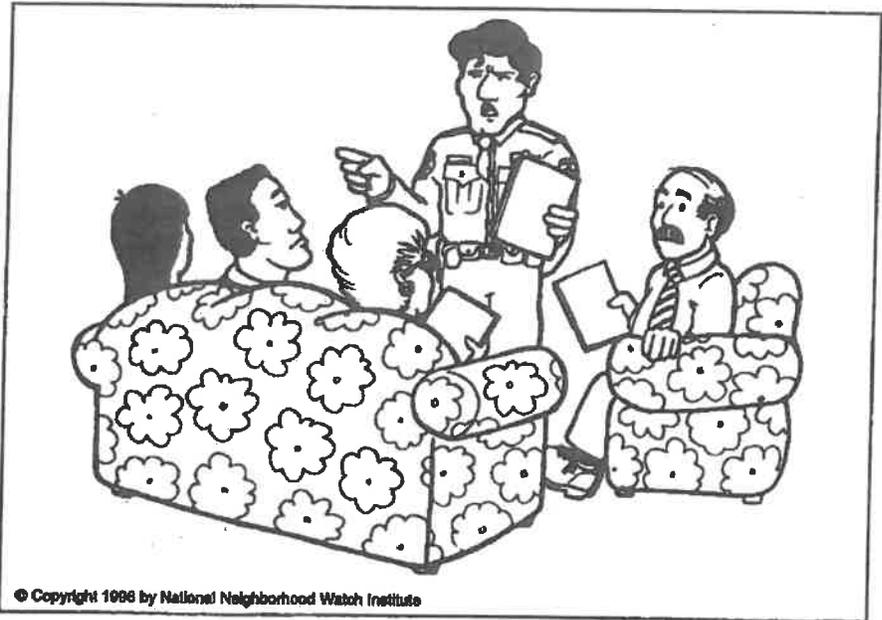
INFORMATION SHARING

- 1 Discuss area's strengths, weaknesses and problems.
- 2 Distribute updated NNWI Family Data Summary Sheets, NNWI Telephone Trees and NNWI Block Maps.
- 3 Distribute NNWI Participants' Handbooks, NNWI Personal and Home Security Handbooks and any other training literature which has become available.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- 1 Perform a Suspect Description exercise, including asking each person to explain what is meant by "She Simply Could Not Have Had Any Really Good Early Warning About Him"?
- 2 Define and discuss suspicious activity
- 3 Review when you call 911 and when you call your law enforcement agency's business number.

Emphasize importance of calling, without hesitation, if they see, hear or smell anything suspicious



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- 4 Discuss any problems in the area, particularly in rural areas where getting together may not be as frequent as in a city block.

HOME SECURITY -

- 1 Discuss security measures that can be taken.
- 2 See who needs help with lock installation, tree trimming, installing outside lights, etc.
- 3 For rural areas, discuss the concept of zone security and the placement of automatic timers for lights and radios.

- 4 Discuss the use of signage for both street and individual property. Discuss use of window labels and decals.

PROPERTY ENGRAVING/ PROTECTION

- 1 Explain how best to mark and inventory property.
- 2 Ask a volunteer to video-tape the interior of each home for insurance purposes. Put the video tape in a safe place, somewhere away from your

home. Set schedule for engraving and video-taping.

- 3 Purchase and share an engraver. Distribute window warning labels or decals which are available from NNWI.

TASK ASSIGNMENT

- 1 Delegate responsibilities based on the above discussions.
- 2 Set deadlines for completion, or milestones along the way.
- 3 Collect donations to purchase signs. Decide where the signs should go.

WRAP-UP

- 1 Decide on time and place of next meeting.
- 2 Who will handle refreshments?

Enjoy the camaraderie of your neighbors, socialize and make getting together for the Neighborhood Watch Meeting a fun experience on a regular basis. See Meeting Topics on page 6 for other ideas for subjects to be discussed at your regularly scheduled meetings.

KEEPING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP ACTIVE

Your Neighborhood Watch group will have high interest at the start-up and for a few meetings thereafter. The real trick is keeping the group actively going and involving all the neighbors for years. Here are a list of 22 ideas to help you have regular activities, in which all the Participants have fun, socialize and attempt to solve neighborhood problems. These really take the motto, "We Look Out For Each Other!", to its fulfillment.

INFORMATION SHARING

Write your own block newsletter. Keep people up to date on crime or other subjects of interest including the goings-on within your own group. With desk-top publishing so easy to do on a home computer, the task is made easy.

Involve several neighbors in gathering information to share. It's fun.

CARPOOLING

Share a ride to work, downtown, shopping, etc., with a neighbor or two — especially the seniors on your block.



BLOCK HOME

Involve at least one home on the block to serve as a safe haven for kids who are frightened. Latch key kids are a big problem. Loneliness of seniors is another problem. Put them together to get a great solution to both problems.

GROUP MATERIAL BUYING

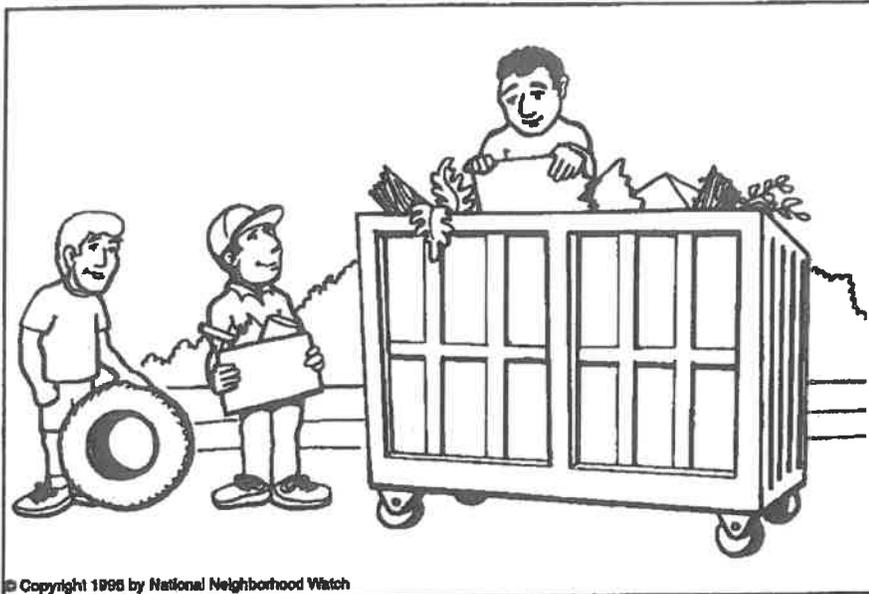
Many nurseries, building-supply businesses, equipment rental yards, etc. will give customers a discount on large orders. Tie this in with your block clean-up day; buying fruit trees, shrubbery or firewood; or renting home repair

equipment. You might even extend this to groceries and canned goods if you have a Price Club, Sam's Club or other wholesaler/retailer offering bulk purchases.

BLOCK GARAGE SALE

Buy an ad in the local paper and post signs advertising your big block-wide garage sale. Conduct it on the same Saturday and get the whole block involved. You can even buy each other's cast-offs so you can have the makings of your next Block Garage Sale.





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BLOCK CLEAN-UP

Rent a dumpsters for a week-end. Neighbors can share tools and expertise to help one another. Cap off the day with a celebration of your achievement.

BLOCK INVENTORY

Explore the wealth of talent on your block — auto or bicycle mechanics, gardeners, artists, typists, lawyers — all those secret talents can be bartered. Share your expertise, make friends and maybe even save some money.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Every part of the country has earthquakes, floods, fires, hurricane, tornado or other disasters. Develop plans to cope with these emergencies and insure that all the Participants have their homes prepared, food and water supplies on hand, and meeting places for their loved ones decided upon. Lots to do this in area.

WINTER EMERGENCY PLANNING

Develop a game plan for winter emergencies. Who has a gas stove? Four wheel drive vehicle? Does anyone have special needs? Who has a CB or ham radio? Identify and inventory your block resources.

WALKING / EXERCISE GROUPS

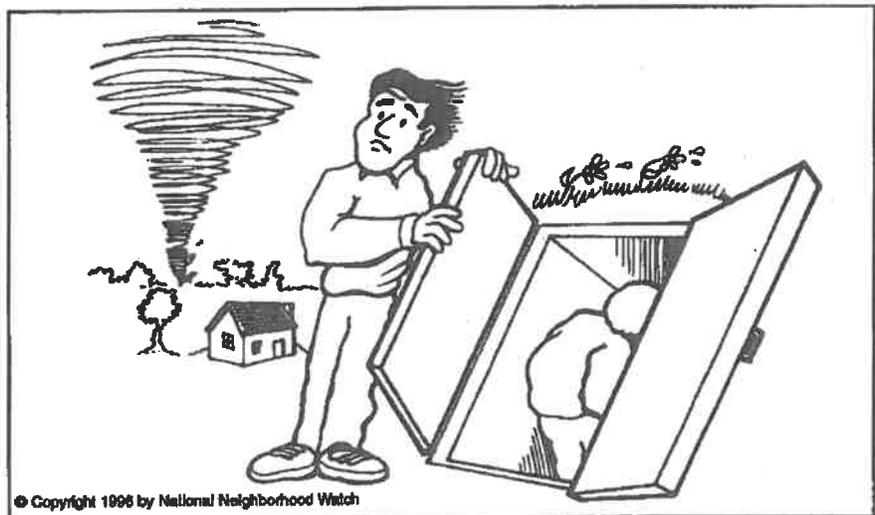
It's easier to exercise with a companion at a regular time. Organize a weight loss competition. Celebrate with a low-cal pot luck.

HOLIDAY DINNER GET-TOGETHER

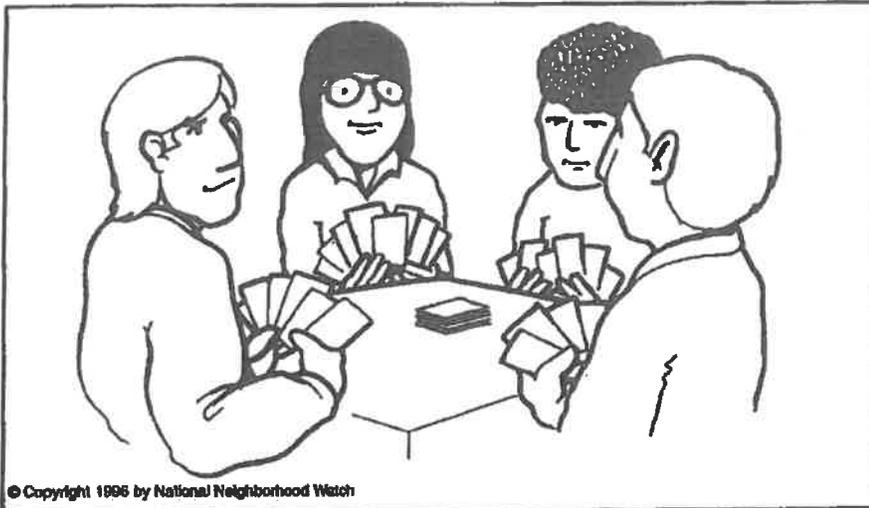
Arrange space at a local high school, church or fraternal organization for a multi-family celebration. Share the work and the cost of the meal and provide home-born entertainment. Could be lots of fun!

PROGRESSIVE DINNERS

Hors d'ouerves at one house, salad at the next, soup at the third, main course at the fourth and dinner at the fifth. You really don't have far to drive. Each house provides one course, and the party moves from house to house. And what a wonderful opportunity to socialize and visit each other's homes.



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CARD OR GAME GROUPS

When was the last time you played bingo, gin rummy, canasta, Monopoly or Scrabble? How much fun was it? Get away from the TV and enjoy each other's company. And while you're kibitzing, talk about Neighborhood Watch.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Once a month, instead of watching TV, get together with neighbors, designate a rotating facilitator, and discuss any topic.

KID'S PARADE

If your block has a lot of kids, show them off with a children's parade. Close off your block for the event. (Be sure to coordinate

this with your city.) Area merchants are often willing to donate soft drinks, treats and prizes for these events.

GOODS EXCHANGE

Collect unwanted books, toys, or outgrown children's clothing. Exchange them with neighbors for new "treasures."

SUPPORT GROUPS

Seniors, young mothers and single parents will benefit from meeting to each other share concerns.

SIGN POSTING PARTY

Celebrate community spirit by arranging a party for posting your Neighborhood Watch sign.

BOOSTER MEETING

Arrange for a speaker to come to your Neighborhood Watch meeting. You can always get a politician who is running for office or just been elected. A great source for a speaker is your local TV or radio station's speakers' bureau.

BLOCK GARDEN

A neighbor with unused garden space can let others use it in exchange for produce, or your city might provide space for a garden plot in a community garden. Celebrate with a harvest festival.



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CHILD CARE CO-OP

With the aid of your NW Telephone Tree, organize a childcare Co-Op. This is like a baby-sitting bank, where no money changes hands, only time. A rotating bookkeeper reminds members when they owe hours—or they need a break!

TELEPHONE REASSURANCE

Establish a system whereby seniors or shut-ins are telephoned daily to make sure they are all right.



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BENEFITS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

The eight most important benefits of being involved in your own Neighborhood Watch program are:

- 1** Neighborhood policing by you and your neighbors, together with your own police or sheriff, creates a greater sense of security, well-being, and reduction of fear of crime because you know you and your neighbors will "... **LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER.**" Most law enforcement agencies are limited in their available manpower — you help stretch that tax dollar and add eyes, ears and even noses by your involvement in Neighborhood Watch.
- 2** Reduce the risk of being a crime victim. You are taught how to take preventive measures that substantially decrease the likelihood of becoming a crime victim. Not only does Neighborhood Watch reduce the risk of your home being burglarized, the instances of other crimes such as vandalism, graffiti, personal assault, auto theft and other personal crimes also decrease.

- 3** The Neighborhood Watch program trains you how to observe and report suspicious activities occurring in your neighborhood. It trains you on what information law enforcement officers need when you report a crime and why. It trains you to detect illegal activities 24 hours a day - seven days a week.

- 4** Knowing your neighbors is an important feature and benefit of this program. You get to know Participants regular patterns so you can see when something is unusual. You get to know how to contact them quickly. You get to know when they are on vacation, when they are away at work and who are the occupants of their home. Being aware of the goings-on in your neighborhood is not invading any one's privacy or snooping, it is guarding against trouble or any situation which could be dangerous to your neighborhood. It simply comes down to our motto, "**WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER.**"

- 5** You have greater access to criminal activity information. Neighborhood Watch programs are designed to keep Participants informed of crime trends and patterns so they will be better prepared to spot criminal activity in their neighborhood.

- 6** Participants get on-going training in how to protect themselves. In the early 1980's the terms of "Car-Jacking" or "ATM victims" were not even in our vocabulary. Do you or someone you know have a car alarm, or an anti-theft device installed or provide other protection for

you as a driver or your vehicle? Do you now carry an ATM card? And do you sometimes do your banking at odd hours? Neighborhood Watch provides this training.

- 7** Posting Neighborhood Watch signs on your street and labels or decals in your windows tells a criminal that (a) you are not an easy target, that (b) they are probably being watched and (c) you have taken the steps necessary to deter crime in your neighborhood. Convicted burglars report avoiding neighborhoods that have Neighborhood Watch signs posted.

- 8** Address issues of mutual interest by getting together with your neighbors on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly, or what ever you wish). These may be for other crime prevention, fire prevention, local planning, or other projects which you alone may say, "Why don't they do something about...!" As a community, as an organization already working together as a Neighborhood Watch group, you have the stepping stone needed to getting things done.

Just Do It!



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*We can do something for ourselves.
Get involved.
Make a difference.
Have fun at the same time!*

We welcome you to our First
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH MEETING

at _____ on _____, the _____ of _____
 Time Day Date Month

at the home of: _____

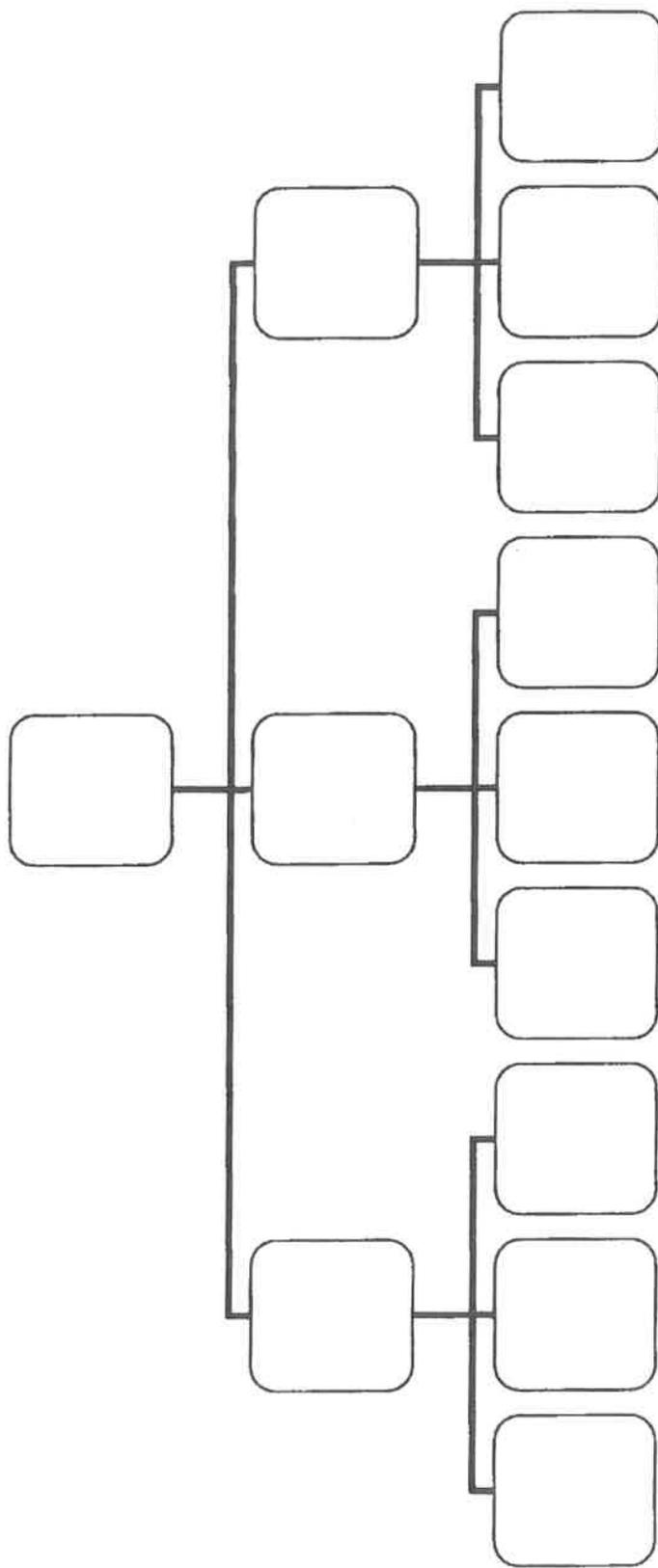
at: _____
 Address

This will be a good chance for us neighbors to meet each other as friends. Refreshments will be served. The meeting should last about 90 minutes, giving us time to talk about how we can mutually prevent crime and better our neighborhood. Please complete the Family Data Sheet accompanying this flyer and bring it to the meeting with your own ideas and concerns for our neighborhood.



Please call _____
 to confirm the attendance of you and your family.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH
PHONE TREE



LOS BANOS POLICE DEPARTMENT

EMERGENCY DIAL 911

NON EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER 209-827-7070

**LOS BANOS POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH
FAMILY INFORMATION FORM**

FAMILY NAME: _____ **ADDRESS NUMBER:** _____

COLOR AND STYLE OF HOUSE: _____

HOME OCCUPANTS:

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

NAME **AGE** **NAME** **AGE** **NAME** **AGE**

PRIMARY PHONE: _____ **SECONDARY PHONE:** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SKILLS WILLING TO SHARE? (IE. COMPUTER, TELEPHONE, WRITING, ETC.) _____

VEHICLES:

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

YEAR **MAKE** **MODEL** **COLOR** **LICENSE PLATE NUMBER**

YEAR **MAKE** **MODEL** **COLOR** **LICENSE PLATE NUMBER**

ROUTINE HELP AND THEIR SCHEDULES: (IE. CLEANING, GARDENING, POOL, ETC.) _____

ANY SPECIAL MEDICAL CONCERNS/INFORMATION: _____

KID'S DOCTOR AND PHONE NUMBER: _____

PETS (ESPECIALLY DOGS): _____

ALARM COMPANY AND PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACTS: NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS:

ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS:

