

*Community Watch In Charlotte-Mecklenburg*



**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department  
Crime Prevention Section**

Email: [crimepreventionunit@cmpd.org](mailto:crimepreventionunit@cmpd.org)  
704-336-2310

## COMMUNITY WATCH

### You and Community Watch

Community Watch is neighbors working with neighbors and the police to prevent crime. The Community Watch program is based on the concept of people looking out for one another and to send a message to potential criminals that someone is watching every move they make.

### How to Organize a Community Watch

1. Define the area for the Community Watch. The community should identify the streets, the block number range on each street and the numbers of houses/units involved. The "Community Watch Information" form in the "Chairperson's Packet" should be filled out with this information.
2. Organize a meeting in a home, church, community building or school and invite everybody who will be within the boundaries of the Community Watch: residences, businesses, churches. Everyone is a potential crime victim so encourage everyone to attend the meeting.
3. Invite a member of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department to the meeting by contacting your local police district or the Crime Prevention Unit at 704/336-2310. The officer will explain everyone's role in Community Watch; offer home security tips and provide advice on reporting suspicious activities and crimes.
4. In order to become an "**Active**" Community Watch you will need to have a majority of the total amount of residents, within the defined boundaries, in attendance at the meeting.
5. Select a chairperson and block captains. The chairperson will be the key contact with the police department's Crime Prevention

Specialists and Response Area Officers. The block captains should assist the chairperson in keeping the community informed.

6. If the community does have a majority of the neighborhood represented at this meeting, "Community Watch" Sign(s) will be issued. The community will be considered an "**Active**" Community Watch.
7. To remain an "**Active**" Community Watch the community must have at least two Community Watch meetings a year with a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Officer in attendance.
8. If the community does not have two meetings within the year they would be deemed "**Inactive**" and the issued Community Watch Sign(s) would be removed.
9. To **reactivate** the Community Watch the community must organize another meeting with a majority of the residents present and have a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Officer in attendance.

## **ACTIVE COMMUNITY WATCH**

Community Watch participants are the extra eyes and ears for reporting crime and helping neighbors. They help build pride and serve as a catalyst in efforts to address community concerns and solve problems. Participants are not asked to be vigilantes or to assume the role of the police.

### **Being a Nosy Neighbor**

1. If you see an actual crime being committed, a suspected crime or threatening situations, call **911**.
2. Watch out for your neighbor's home when they are away. Become familiar with who belongs and who doesn't and know your neighbor's vehicles.
3. Tell your neighbors and Block Captains when you're going to be away so they can watch your home.

4. Engrave your property with your North Carolina driver's license number and keep a written inventory of your property along with the serial numbers.

Community Watch participants should check the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Departments Web Site at [www.cmpd.org](http://www.cmpd.org) to obtain crime statistics for the community, or call the CMPD Crime Analysis Office at 704/336-4043.

### **OPERATION ID**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department **STRONGLY** recommends that you complete an inventory of the property inside your home. Keep your records in a safe place and continue to update it when new items are purchased.

Engraving personal items is also recommended. Some burglars will avoid your home if they think that your valuables are marked. Often marked items are more difficult for criminals to sell. A more important reason to mark or engrave your property, however, is that these items are much more easily identified and returned to you when police recover them. When engraving follow these tips:

Use your driver's license number for engraving, and place a star (asterisk) after the last digit. (For example, NCDL 1234567\*) **DO NOT USE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS!** Mark the items in a prominent place that can be seen without taking anything apart. Keep a list of all the engraved items. Keep this information in a locked fireproof box, if available.

As an added measure of protection photograph or videotape items which cannot be easily engraved or that would effect the value if a mark were placed on it (i.e. silver, jewelry, etc.)

## **MAINTAINING AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY WATCH**

The installation of Community Watch Signs at your neighborhood entrance should not be a signal that your task is completed. Actually, this event marks the beginning of many responsibilities on the part of your newly established Community Watch.

To insure that your program remains active and interest remains strong, the following suggestions should be implemented:

- It is recommended that your neighborhood set up an annual update meeting
- Plan quarterly neighborhood events such as a block party, cookouts, kids day, etc...
- Participate in National Night Out, the first Tuesday of August
- Send out a newsletter, monthly or bi-monthly
- Set up an email or phone information tree