

# El Paso County Sheriff's Office

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM:

### *THE HANDBOOK*



***Together we can make a difference!***



**Neighborhood Watch Coordinator**  
**(719) 520-7151**



## Why Start a Neighborhood Watch

The major goals of the program are:

- To make citizens, their families, and their homes less vulnerable to crime.
- To increase cooperation between citizens and law enforcement to help make communities safer.

Resources for law enforcement agencies are often limited and the El Paso County Sheriff's Office is no exception. There are a limited number of deputies patrolling the entire county at any given time and they simply can't be everywhere at once. Citizens can help a great deal by acting as extra eyes and ears for law enforcement.

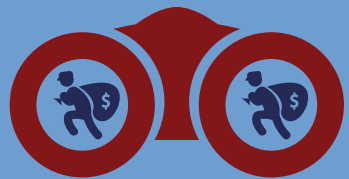
There are many benefits to forming a watch group. You become better acquainted with your neighbors; you learn how to keep your home and family safer; you become better prepared to respond to suspicious or criminal activity; and you help to make your community a better place to live with a proactive approach to fighting crime.

When you and your neighbors form a watch group, you make it known that you will not tolerate criminal activity in your community. By looking out for each other, securing your homes and your possessions, posting Neighborhood Watch signs and reporting suspicious activity, you make your community less attractive for potential criminals.

### WHAT QUALIFIES AS *SUSPICIOUS*?

Anything or anyone who seems out of place in an otherwise "normal" environment is suspicious. For example:

- Open or broken doors or windows at a residence where no one is home, or if the home is known to be vacant, or at a business that is supposedly closed.
- Unusual noises, like glass breaking, crashing sounds, gunshots, screaming, or dogs barking continuously.
- Someone loitering or peering into windows of cars or homes, or trying door handles to see if they are locked.



Do not attempt to confront a person involved in suspicious behavior yourself. Call the Sheriff's Office at 911 for a crime in progress, or non-emergency dispatch at 719-390-5555 .



## What Does Neighborhood Watch Mean to You



### Neighborhood Watch Program

Members of Neighborhood Watch groups have three main responsibilities: **Observation, Communication, and Security.**

**Observation** is paying attention to what is happening around you. Keep an eye out for your neighbors and their property as well as your own. Be familiar with people who have legitimate reasons to be in the area—and pay attention to those who don't. Residents are the best authority as to what is normal and acceptable for their neighborhood.



**Communication** is simply passing on your observations or any information that you receive. If you witness suspicious behavior or discover a crime, report it to the Sheriff's Office immediately. Occasionally, Block Captains may receive bulletins from the Sheriff's Office if a very serious crime or patterns of crime have occurred in their area. That information should be reported to group members so they are aware of the incidents.

**Security** involves taking a critical look at your own home, your habits, and the entire neighborhood to ensure that the area is not inviting to potential criminals. This includes assessing and possibly upgrading physical security measures, locks, lighting, and other features to create the safest environment possible.





## How to Get Your Group Started

The first step is to speak with your neighbors and find out if they are interested in starting a group. Once you have enough people who wish to get involved, set up a date, time, and location for the initial meeting. Please call the **Crime Prevention Coordinator at 520-7151** at least two weeks in advance of your meeting date in order to secure the attendance of someone from the Sheriff's Office to talk about Neighborhood Watch, help get your group started, and discuss any current issues in your area.

Since neighborhoods vary, we recommend that each group adjust their program as necessary. However, we do ask that each group meet the following requirements:

- There should be at least five homes/families involved from the same street, road, or cul-de-sac. This can be adjusted as needed for rural and less densely-populated areas.
- The group should hold at least three to four meetings a year.
- Neighborhood Watch signs delineating the watch area will be posted according to Sheriff's Office policy.
- A Block Captain should be chosen for every five to ten homes. This person will maintain the list of participants for their area and update the Crime Prevention Coordinator about membership/status changes to their group.
- Block Captains will be in charge of communication among group members and the Sheriff's Office. This includes forwarding newsletters, bulletins and other important information sent by the Sheriff's Office to Block Captains or to their group members, as well as alerting the Sheriff's Office concerning suspicious activity.
- Block Captains can request crime prevention presentations by the Crime Prevention Coordinator for group meetings, giving a few weeks advance notice whenever possible.





## How to Keep Your Neighborhood Watch Program Going Strong

Participate as a group. Communicate often with neighbors, letting them know if anything unusual occurs or about upcoming events. Welcome new residents and inform them about neighborhood programs, including Neighborhood Watch.

Try to schedule Neighborhood Watch meetings at regular intervals, so people know in advance when they will occur. Turn these meetings into neighborhood picnics, block parties, or holiday gatherings. Include the kids in neighborhood plans and parties!

Hold a neighborhood clean-up day. Work on a local park or common areas in the neighborhood. Offer to help residents who may need assistance with keeping up their yards. Do their trees need trimming? Does their fence need minor repairs? If their yard looks better, so does your neighborhood!

Find out about classes you can attend as a group, such as "Refuse to Be a Victim," offered periodically by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. The publication "Neighborhood News" and the Sheriff's Office website announce upcoming classes and sign-up information.



POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Participate in annual National Night Out events. The first Tuesday in August is celebrated nationally as a way for citizens to support crime prevention and send a message to criminals that they are fighting back. Neighborhoods can have block parties or other events. Representatives from the El Paso County Sheriff's Office try to attend as many events as possible.

### TIPS

- Publicize your meeting at least one week in advance.
- Talk to your neighbors about it in person, if possible.
- Make sure your meeting location is easily accessible and that you have chosen the most convenient time possible for the largest number of residents. (A Sheriff's Office representative is normally available for evening and weekend meetings.)



## **Additional Sheriff's Office Resources**

### **CADET/EXPLORER PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7342**

This program introduces young men and women, ages 14 to 21, to careers in Law Enforcement and Detentions.

### **CITIZENS' ACADEMY:**

**719-520-7216**

The Citizens' Academy gives citizens an inside look at the various functions of the Sheriff's Office. Participants tour the detention facilities, go on a ride-along with a deputy and learn about the responsibilities of each division from the staff who work there.

### **SHERIFF'S CITIZEN PATROL:**

**719-520-7151**

This program utilizes citizen volunteers to perform law enforcement-related duties that do not require sworn officers, including traffic control, parking issues, and crime prevention.

### **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:**

**719-575-8400**

This division provides disaster preparedness training including CERT (Citizens' Emergency Response Training), and Hazardous Materials Response.

### **RESERVE DEPUTY PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7342**

Men and women 21 years of age and older who want to work as law enforcement officers in a volunteer capacity can become Reserve Deputies. They must attend the Reserve Academy, become POST-certified, and participate in field training just like regular deputies.

### **RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM:**

**719-520-7270**

This program allows citizens to ride with patrol deputies during normal shifts so they can observe incidents and situations that deputies respond to every day.

### **9-1-1 EDUCATION:**

**719-390-5555**

The Communications Center offers instruction concerning how Emergency Medical Dispatch works and the proper use of 9-1-1.

### **SPEAKERS BUREAU:**

**719-520-7183**

This is a resource for civic organizations and community groups who wish to request speakers from the Sheriff's Office to give presentations on topics of interest and free of charge.

**TRAFFIC UNIT MESSAGE LINE: 719-520-7192**

Citizens can leave messages for the Traffic Unit about traffic issues, speeding concerns, etc. This Unit is a community-oriented problem-solving unit whose philosophy is to prevent traffic crashes through education and enforcement.

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE: 719-520-7272**

Full-time civilian employees and dedicated Victim Advocate volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to assist crime victims and their families.

**Volunteer Coordinator: 719-520-7216**

The Volunteer Coordinator can provide information on volunteer opportunities available throughout the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

**Crime Tips: 719-520-7777**

This is a non-emergent tip line which is checked during business hours. Tips requiring immediate action should be given to the El Paso County Dispatch Center at 390-5555.

**Community Relations: 719-520-7162**

This unit coordinates EPSO participation at community events, strengthens relationships within the community and supports a healthy interaction between law enforcement and the community we serve.

For more information about these and other programs and services, visit the El Paso County Sheriff's Office website at <http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com>

**Your Personal Contacts:**

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## Sample Flyer for Your First Meeting

### El Paso County Sheriff's Office

#### NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM:



***Together we can make a difference!***

We are holding our first meeting to discuss starting a Neighborhood watch group on our street.

**WHERE: XYZ Building, 123 Main St.**

**DATE: Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**TIME: 7:00 p.m.**

A representative from the El Paso County Sheriff's Office will attend to talk about the program and ways we can make our homes and neighborhood safer.

**For more information or to RSVP, call:  
Jane Doe at 719-555-1234.**





## El Paso County Sheriff's Office Vacation Check Request Form

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting Person(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address for Check: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates for Check: From \_\_\_\_\_ Through \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s) while away: \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle OK on Premises: \_\_\_\_\_

(color/make/model/plate#)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Persons OK on \_\_\_\_\_

Premises: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Key holder: \_\_\_\_\_

(name/phone#)

Additional Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## El Paso County Sheriff's Office Vacation Check Request Form

Please completely fill out the Vacation Check Request Form, on previous page and return to the Crime Prevention Coordinator. For additional Vacation Check Request Forms please visit <http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com>.

### Crime Prevention & Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

(719) 520-7151

Fax: (719) 520-7770

[NeighborhoodWatch@elpasoco.com](mailto:NeighborhoodWatch@elpasoco.com)



**Honest** with our **Community**  
**Loyal** to our **Oath**  
**United** as **One**

#### El Paso County Sheriff's Office

27 East Vermijo Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
[www.epcsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com)



# WARNING!

*THIS AREA IS PROTECTED BY:*



***Neighborhood Watch Program***



**THE EL PASO COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



## Helpful Phone Numbers

El Paso County Sheriff's Office

*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*

**(719) 390-5555**

[www.epcsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.epcsheriffsoffice.com)

El Paso County Sheriff's Office

*(Traffic Hotline)*

**(719) 520-7192**

Colorado Springs Police Department

*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*

**(719) 444-7000**

<https://cspd.coloradosprings.gov>

Fountain Police Department

*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*

**(719) 382-8555**

<http://www.fountaincolorado.org>

Colorado State Patrol

*(non-emergency Dispatch number)*

**(719) 544-2424**

[www.csp.state.co.us](http://www.csp.state.co.us)

Colorado Department of Transportation

*(Road Conditions)*

**(877) 315-7623**

[www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org)

El Paso County Department of Transportation

**(719) 520-6460**



**FOR EMERGENCIES  
DIAL 911**

