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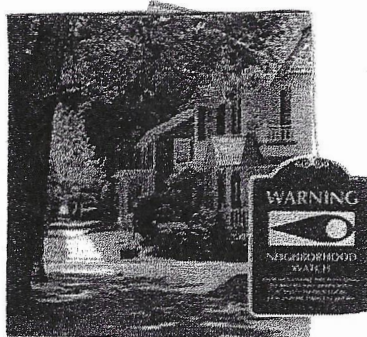


# HOW TO AVOID BEING BURGLARIZED

What you can do to protect yourself, and property.



## Leader Guide



Developed by Patti Malanaphy

For

for

Oregon Association for  
Family & Community Education





## LEADERS INTRODUCTION

Each year in the U.S. there are more than five million home burglaries. Nine out of ten of these crimes are preventable. The risk of being burglarized can be greatly reduced by taking simple steps to make your home more difficult to enter and less enticing to would be burglars.

Remember the greatest weapons in the fight to prevent burglaries are light, time and noise.

What is Burglary?

Burglary is the stealing of possessions that are not belonging to the person taking the items.

It can include breaking into a home or business and taking goods without permission.

The Effects of Burglary on Victims.

When criminals break into a house or office building, they can take a lot more than just valuables. Burglars also can steal a person's sense of security, which could lead to one purchasing expensive security systems or seeking counseling from psychological and emotional effects of the trauma.

Burglaries can have a lasting impact on victims.



## BURGLARY! WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT US?

### LEADER'S GUIDE

Your home is your castle....or is it? Is your home really safe once you leave it for work, school, and fun? Your home is considered a sanctuary where you should feel safe. Your home is the only environment where you have control over who can get close to you and your family. Protecting your home and family from criminal intrusion should be high on your list of priorities.

By far, the most common threat to our home is burglary. According to the FBI, burglary occurs somewhere in the United States every 15.4 seconds. By definition the crime of burglary is a non-confrontational property crime that occurs when we are not at home. However, becoming a burglary victim can leave a family feeling vulnerable and violated. To avoid becoming a burglary victim, it is important to first gain an understanding of who commits them and why.

The majority of home and apartment burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are away. The summer months of July and August have the most burglaries with February having the fewest crimes. Burglaries are committed most often by young males under 25 years of age looking for items that are small, expensive, and can easily be converted to cash.

\*\*\*What items do you think they would most likely look for? \*\*\*

Favorite items are cash, jewelry, guns, watches, laptop computers, VCRs, video players, CDs and small electronic devices are high on the list.

Quick cash is needed for living expenses and drugs. Statistics tell us that 70% of the burglars use some amount of force to enter a dwelling, but their preference is to gain easy access through an open door or window. Ordinary household tools like screwdrivers, channel-lock pliers, small pry bars, and small hammers are most often used by burglars. Burglary continues to flourish because police can only clear about 13% of all reported burglaries and rarely catch the thief in the act.

Although home burglaries may seem random in occurrence, they actually involved selection process. The burglar's selection process is simple. Choose an unoccupied home with the easiest access, the greatest amount of cover, and with the best escape routes.

\*\*\*Questions: Has anyone been a victim of burglary?\*\*\*  
How did you feel about it? What action did you take?  
Were you prepared for home break-in?

Be a good neighbor and look out for each other. Get to know your neighbors on each side of your home and the three directly across the street. Good neighbors will watch out for your home when you are away. They can report suspicious activity to the police or to you. Good neighbors can pick up your mail or newspaper. Allow a neighbor to have a key to check inside you home for any problems. Also you don't have to hide a key outside. Experienced burglars know to look for hidden keys around your doors or windows.

\*\*\*continue with any questions or comments.\*\*\*

## FOLLOW UP WITH PROGRAM MATERIALS.

1. Burglary Prevention
2. Seniors can take precautions.
3. Information on Neighborhood Watch.
4. Home Security System.
5. Home Security Quiz.

Follow UP: Continue during program presentation encouraging interaction from participants. Open up for questions and comments.

Seeking participants to share any life experiences that relate to being a victim.



## Burglary Prevention

Each year in the U.S. there are more than five million home burglaries. Nine out of ten of these crimes are preventable. The risk of being burglarized can be greatly reduced by taking simple steps to make your home more difficult to enter and less enticing to would-be burglars.

**Remember the greatest weapons in the fight to prevent burglaries are light, time and noise.**

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### Light

- Make sure that exterior lights are mounted out of reach, so that burglars can't easily unscrew bulbs.
  - Consider buying motion-sensitive lights, which are now available at relatively low prices.
  - Use a variable light timer to activate lights inside your home.
  - Trim trees and shrubs near doors and windows so burglars can't hide in the shadows
- 

### Time

Make it time-consuming for a burglar to break into your home by :

- installing deadbolt locks on all exterior doors.
  - installing double key locks in doors which contain glass. This will keep a burglar from being able to open the door simply by breaking the glass and reaching through. (Note: so that everyone in the house can get out in the event of a fire, be sure to keep the key in designated place).
  - placing additional locks on all windows and patio doors.
- 

### Noise

- Get a dog. You don't need a large attack dog; even a small dog creates a disturbance that burglars would prefer to avoid. Remember to License and Vaccinate it.
- Consider having someone care for your dogs in your home while you're away, instead of boarding them.
- If you can afford it, install an alarm system that will alert neighbors of a burglar's

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presence. Most systems can even summon local police directly. Don't forget to check the Alarm Code.

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### Other tips to prevent break-ins:

- Think like a burglar. "Case" your home the way a burglar would and look for easy ways to enter your home.
  - Be sure valuables such as guns, electronic devices and artwork are not visible from the street.
  - Be sure to lock up ladders and tools which could be used to break into your home.
  - Work together with your neighbors. Organize a Neighborhood Watch and let your neighbors know when you will be away for an extended period.
  - While on vacation, have someone pick up your newspapers and mail, so that they do not accumulate and alert burglars of your absence.
  - Display your house number conspicuously and have it well illuminated. This will help police and emergency personnel find your home quickly.
- 

### Just in Case...

Sometimes, all your efforts won't stop a determined burglar. It's wise to take some precautions that will help you get your property back should a criminal successfully break into your home:

- Make a list of your belongings (be sure to keep receipts, especially for expensive items like stereos and computers). Be sure to update this list periodically.
- Keep copies of your inventory list and receipts in a safe deposit box or with a friend. (This is also important in the event of a house fire.)
- Photographing and/or videotaping your possessions is a convenient way to keep a record of what you own.
- Engrave your valuables with an identification or mark to deter burglary and to prove ownership should the article be stolen and recovered by the police.
- Be sure you have the right coverage. You may need to purchase additional coverage to protect special items like expensive jewelry or rare antiques.
- If you don't own your home, seriously consider buying a renter's policy. Your landlord will generally not be responsible for your possessions. Rental coverage is available at competitive rates and these policies also offer important protection against liability and losses due to fire or storm damage.

You can also visit this related site from the United Kingdom for more useful information:

### [Secured Home](#)

Send mail to [Webmaster](#) with questions or comments about this web site.  
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Last modified: 05/02/12



**Safety Article:**

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## Seniors can take precautions to avoid becoming burglary victims

*by Jessica Leake*

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Most of us would assume taking a bus at 1 p.m. or going for a short walk to the store in broad daylight would be safe. Not lately.

The Seattle Police Department has reported more than 842 strong-arm robberies citywide since January of last year, many of them involving elderly Asian women. Some police officers in the South precinct have even spent time teaching older adults how to protect themselves on the streets.

The Healthy Aging Partnership, a coalition of some 35 nonprofit and public organizations dedicated to the health and well being of Puget Sound seniors, offers these tips to seniors to help avoid becoming victims of crime.

While it isn't always possible to walk in groups, before dark, or without a purse or wallet, it is possible to take important steps toward a much safer trip to the store or neighborhood park. One of the most important rules of thumb when it comes to safety is to be aware of your surroundings.

For example, when walking alone always look in front of you as well as behind you. If you notice someone following you, go to the nearest open business or pay phone and call the police. Always walk in well-lit areas and be familiar with the path you're taking.



## Here are some other things to consider for preventing crime:

- If you must carry a purse, hold it close to your body. Do not let it dangle by your side. Also, keep a wallet in a side pocket, rather than in the back.
- When taking the bus, sit close to the driver and be aware of who gets off the bus with you. Trust your instincts. If anyone seems suspicious, report them to the police.
- Avoid dark, unfamiliar or deserted routes - even if they are the shortest.
- Try to tell a family member where you are going and when you'll be back.
- Carry your car or house key between your index and middle finger as a quick weapon to fight off predators. This will also make for faster entry time once you arrive home.
- If someone stops you to ask for directions, answer from a distance. Do not approach the vehicle.
- Never display large sums of cash in public, especially at an ATM machine. Also, don't carry more cash than you need at one time.

Another tip for seniors to remember is to always report any crime or suspicious behavior done to you. Police say that many older adults are fearful of reporting criminal activities, and perpetrators are going unpunished.

The City of Seattle announced in late November an arrest of eight people for the robberies targeting elderly Asian women in the South Precinct. The Seattle City Council held a forum in December to discuss ways to prevent these crimes. The Police Department increased patrols and conducted undercover surveillance, which eventually led to the arrests.

If you have questions about safety prevention or any other issue related to life as an older adult, call the Healthy Aging Partnership's free and confidential information and assistance line at 1-888-4ELDERS (1-888-435-3377). HAP is generously supported by its partner agencies.



Office of  
Neighborhood  
Involvement

*Promoting a culture of civic engagement by connecting and supporting all Portlanders working together and with government to build inclusive, safe and livable neighborhoods and communities.*

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Amanda Fritz  
Commissioner

Amalia Alarcón de Morris  
Bureau Director



City/County  
Information & Referral Line  
503-823-4000

This document is available at the  
ONI website:  
[www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp)

# Establishing Your Neighborhood Watch

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Crime Prevention Program  
Fall 2009

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a program designed to increase the safety and sense of community in neighborhoods by organizing and involving individuals and families in a united crime prevention effort. Neighborhood Watch participants learn how to:

- Communicate regularly with their neighbors using tools specific to Neighborhood Watch
- Recognize and report suspicious and criminal activity
- Increase home and vehicle security
- Increase personal safety of residents
- Make neighborhoods less attractive to criminals

When neighbors take the responsibility to build and maintain livable and cohesive neighborhoods, those neighborhoods are less vulnerable to crime. Under Neighborhood Watch, involved neighbors collaborate with the City's Crime Prevention Coordinators, police, neighborhood coalitions and associations, schools, parks personnel, area businesses, and others to create a united, secure, and peaceful community.

## Purpose of Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch has several purposes:

- **To help reduce crime and fear of crime in our neighborhoods.** When an organized Neighborhood Watch exists in an area, it can serve as a deterrent to criminal activity, as well as give residents a sense of safety so they can better enjoy their homes and neighborhoods.
- **To help ensure a prompt and effective response to neighborhood crime and livability problems.** Trained Neighborhood Watch members are in a good position to notice problems within a neighborhood, such as burglaries, vandalism, abandoned vehicles, illegal dump sites, evidence of drug dealing or manufacturing, and street prostitution, and they know where to report these problems in order to get a quicker, more effective solution.
- **To promote positive communication and relationships within a neighborhood.** Neighborhood Watch provides an avenue for neighbors to get to know one another and build a sense of community.

## Types of Neighborhood Watch

A Neighborhood Watch is often formed when neighbors notice a problem in the neighborhood, such as a suspected drug house or a series of burglaries. The Neighborhood Watch program can be applied to a number of different environments, such as residential streets,

apartment buildings, college campuses, parks, and business districts. Different environments may call for some differences in organization and operation due to the different crime and livability issues that may be present and the agencies that might respond to these problems.

- *Neighborhood Watch*: The umbrella term for the program, and also the term for the program when it is applied in a single-family housing setting.
- *Apartment Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch in multi-family housing.
- *Campus Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch on a college or corporate campus.
- *Park Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch consisting of neighbors of a park who are focused on preventing crime at the park.
- *Business Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch in a business district, consisting of businesses.

## ***Starting a Neighborhood Watch***

Neighborhood Watches begin with a meeting at which the Crime Prevention Program Coordinator (CPPC) provides the training and materials you need to get started. Below are the steps to take to set up this initial meeting.

### **1. Talk to your CPPC**

Contact the CPPC for your neighborhood to tell him or her that you are interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch. Ask any questions you have about how to proceed. Phone numbers for CPPCs are at the end of this information sheet.

### **2. Ask a neighbor or two to help you**

If you already know some of your neighbors, recruit one or two of them to help you get your Neighborhood Watch up and running.

### **3. Find out about your neighbors' concerns**

Talk with your neighbors, asking them about their crime concerns and about any other block issues they may have. They might provide you with information about suspicious activity on your block at this time. Also ask them about days of the week that would work for them to attend a meeting.

### **4. Decide what area you are going to organize**

At the minimum, invite the 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 where applicable. It is a good idea to start with your own block, then recruit people on surrounding blocks to organize their own blocks. If you are organizing within an apartment complex, invite at least all of the people in your building, and decide if you want to invite the people in adjacent buildings as well.

### **5. Decide the time, date, and location of the first meeting**

Usually Neighborhood Watch trainings are held on weekday evenings, and start around 6:30 - 7:00 p.m. Often meetings are held on your block in someone's home. Choose a meeting space that comfortably accommodates the neighbors you have invited. The initial meeting takes about two hours.



### **6. Ask your CPPC to put the training date on his/her calendar**

Contact the CPPC two to three weeks in advance of your proposed meeting to ensure that he or she has this date and time available. Let him/her know the location of the meeting, the number of households expected and any concerns that your neighbors might have shared with you.

### **7. Deliver invitations to your neighbors**

Use written invitations to invite your neighbors. Distribute the invitations at least a week or two before the meeting. Try to make personal contact with every neighbor as well. This will increase the turnout to the meeting.

Although full block participation is ideal, there are times when a household on the block is suspected of engaging in illegal activity. If the participation of that household makes others reluctant to participate, it is not necessary to include that household.

### **8. Recruit neighbors to help with the meeting**

They may volunteer to help with refreshments, bring extra folding chairs, escort seniors to the meeting and assist you with contacting other neighbors and organizing the Neighborhood Watch.

### **9. Confirm and remind**

On the day of the meeting confirm the time and place with your CPPC. Have several block members help you remind the neighbors of the meeting to maximize turnout.

## ***Outline of the Neighborhood Watch training***

At your training, your CPPC will train your group in the following topics and give you the assistance and materials you need to start your group.

- Purpose of Neighborhood Watch
- Discussion of any crime issues of particular interest to group
- Organizing your Neighborhood Watch
- Roles within a Neighborhood Watch
- How to use Neighborhood Watch tools: block profile questionnaire, block profile form, block map, telephone tree
- Neighborhood Watch signs
- Recognizing and reporting suspicious activity
- 9-1-1 vs. non-emergency number
- Other resources for neighborhood problems
- Describing suspects and vehicles in a way that police can use the information
- Documenting suspicious and criminal activity
- How to improve the security of your home (inside and out) and the security of your vehicle
- Scenarios- how to deal with certain types of situations
- Maintaining your Neighborhood Watch in the long term
- Discussion and signing of volunteer agreements
- Selection of watch organizer
- Q & A



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## ***Follow up training and meetings***

An active Neighborhood Watch often has members join after the initial training that happens when the watch forms. The Crime Prevention Program Coordinator (CPPC) will be happy to train new members of the Neighborhood Watch and do refresher trainings for people who are already members. When a Neighborhood Watch is experienced and established, the Neighborhood Watch organizer may do these trainings. The CPPC can provide the Neighborhood Watch organizer with materials to conduct the training.

It's a good idea for active Neighborhood Watches to set up regular meetings for members to discuss what they are seeing in their neighborhood. At a minimum, the group should meet annually. Many groups find it is more effective to meet more often. The CPPC or a police officer may be able to attend some of these meetings. Meetings are a good time to discuss how more members might be recruited, or any procedural decisions that need to be made. They are also a good time to have a short training on a topic of interest to members of your Neighborhood Watch that would help them better understand trends in crime and livability problems in their neighborhood. For example, additional training in homeless issues, gang activity, or domestic violence may be helpful. Talk to your CPPC about additional training you would like to have. He or she may be able to provide the training, or help you find a trainer on the topic.

El Programa de la Prevención del Crimen tiene un miembro que habla español. Llame por favor al número principal 503-823-4000 si usted necesita los servicios en español.

***The full Neighborhood Watch manual is available on the Office of Neighborhood Involvement website at [www.portlandonline.com/oni](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni). Follow the links for crime prevention. The manual contains more details about the tools and procedures of Neighborhood Watch.***

### **Crime Prevention Program Numbers**

*All numbers are area code 503*

Administrative Support .....	823-4064
Central Northeast .....	823-4098, 823-4763, 823-2779
East .....	823-3505, 823-5532, 823-2779, 823-4763
North.....	823-4098, 823-4094
Northeast.....	823-4763, 823-4764, 823-4098
Northwest .....	823-4257
Southeast .....	823-0540, 823-3432, 823-2781, 823-3505
Southwest.....	823-3131
Downtown.....	823-5852
Events and Training Supervisor.....	823-9666
Program Manager.....	823-2030

#### *Related services*

Liquor license notification .....	823-3092
Graffiti abatement.....	823-5860
Code enforcement hotline ( <i>noise, nuisance, inspections, etc.</i> )....	823-2633
Neighborhood mediation .....	823-3152
City/County information & referral .....	823-4000



- Information
  - Training
  - Services
  - Database
- Membership
  - Multimedia Development
  - Traffic Division
  - Occupational Division

Full Screen / Print View

### Membership

- ▶ Members A-Z
- ▶ Membership Benefits
- ▶ Membership Savings and Cost
- ▶ Safety Council LOGO for Members

### Multimedia Development

- ▶ Customers
- ▶ Multimedia Examples
- ▶ Who to Contact

### Traffic Division

- ▶ Driving Programs
- ▶ Traffic Court Courses

### Occupational Division

- ▶ Gulf Coast Occupational Medicine
- ▶ Pocket Toolbox
- ▶ Site Safety Audits
- ▶ Custom Training and Curricula
- ▶ Certificate Programs

# HOME SECURITY QUIZ

## How safe is *your* home?

### TRUE OR FALSE:

1. Sliding glass doors often have weak locks.
2. Most home burglaries occur between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.
3. More than 90% of burglars say they would avoid breaking into a home with an alarm.
4. Installing motion-activated outdoor floodlights is a good safety idea.
5. You shouldn't call the police unless you're certain there is a crime.
6. You should have mail held at the post office when you leave town.
7. Don't leave any trash in your outdoor receptacles when you go on vacation.
8. It's a good idea to use an etching tool to mark your valuables with your driver's license number and state abbreviation.
9. You should close all curtains and shades when you are not home.
10. Safety chains are a good form of security for your home.
11. Growing tall, thick bushes helps protect your home from burglars.
12. Installing a deadbolt lock on your garage helps keep out thieves.
13. You should never keep a spare key in the mailbox, under the doormat or above the .....doorway.



1. Sliding glass doors often have weak locks. **TRUE** - INSTALLING A BOLT LOCK WILL HELP PREVENT THE DOOR FROM BEING SLID OPEN OR LIFTED OUT OF ITS TRACK.
2. Most home burglaries occur between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. **FALSE** - MOST HOME BURGLARIES OCCUR BETWEEN 8 AM AND 5 PM.
3. More than 90% of burglars say they would avoid breaking into a home with an alarm. **TRUE** - AN ALARM SYSTEM IS AN EXCELLENT DETERRENT TO CRIME.
4. Installing motion-activated outdoor floodlights is a good safety idea. **TRUE** - MAKE SURE THESE ARE PLACED WHERE BURGLARS CAN'T EASILY TAMPER WITH THEM.
5. You shouldn't call the police unless you're certain there is a crime. **FALSE** - NOTIFY THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY OF ANY SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE, TRUCKS OR CARS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. DON'T WORRY ABOUT BEING A NUISANCE. THE POLICE WILL WELCOME YOUR CALL AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PREVENT A BURGLARY.
6. You should have mail held at the post office when you leave town. **TRUE** - FULL MAILBOXES MAKE IT CLEAR TO BURGLARS THAT NO ONE IS HOME.
7. Don't leave any trash in your outdoor receptacles when you go on vacation. **FALSE** - BURGLARS LOOK FOR EMPTY OUTDOOR GARBAGE CANS, KNOWING THAT OCCUPIED HOMES PRODUCE GARBAGE AT LEAST EVERY FEW DAYS. WHEN YOU'RE AWAY FROM HOME, HAVE A NEIGHBOR PUT SOME TRASH IN YOUR RECEPTICLES OR, IF YOUR GARBAGE IS PICKED UP CURBSIDE, HAVE THEM PUT A FEW BAGS IN FRONT OF YOUR HOUSE.
8. It's a good idea to use an etching tool to mark your valuables with your driver's license number and state abbreviation. **TRUE** - THIS HELPS POLICE IDENTIFY YOUR PROPERTY AND MAKES THE VALUABLES HARDER FOR THE THIEF TO SELL. THE ETCHING TOOL IS A MINOR EXPENSE, AND MANY LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS WILL EVEN LEND THEM TO YOU FOR FREE.
9. You should close all curtains and shades when you are not home. **FALSE** - LEAVE YOUR CURTAINS SLIGHTLY PARTED. DRAPES OR SHADES THAT ARE FULLY CLOSED GIVE A DESERTED LOOK TO A HOME OR APARTMENT.
10. Safety chains are a good form of security for your home. **FALSE** - SAFETY CHAINS CAN BE BROKEN EASILY WITH FORCE. DRILL A PEEPHOLE IN YOUR DOOR INSTEAD.
11. Growing tall, thick bushes helps protect your home from burglars. **FALSE** - TRIM YOUR TREES AND SHRUBS SO BURGLARS HAVE FEWER PLACES TO HIDE.
12. Installing a deadbolt lock on your garage helps keep out thieves. **TRUE** - KEEPING YOUR GARAGE LOCKED IS AS IMPORTANT AS KEEPING YOUR HOME LOCKED, ESPECIALLY IF THE GARAGE IS ATTACHED. ONCE INSIDE THE GARAGE, A BURGLAR CAN WORK UNINTERRUPTED AT GETTING INTO YOUR HOUSE.
13. You should never keep a spare key in the mailbox, under the doormat or above the doorway. **TRUE** - THESE ARE THE FIRST PLACES THIEVES LOOK.

NOTE: This quiz is intended to help improve your knowledge about burglary prevention.

## HOME SECURITY SYSTEM

### What You Will Need.

If you are going to purchase a home security system for your house, make sure that you get all that you will need, for complete security! Here are the protections that you will need to get!

\* **Burglar alarms.** Glass and door sensors. Glass-break technology installed on your windows will sound alarm when it's broken or tampered with. Entry doors, install sensors that will alert you if opened.

\* **Timer lights.** Lights, those are preprogrammed to go on and off with a switch. Burglars hate light.

\* **Hostage panic button.** A special code can be entered for a no-call back to verify the burglary, and that you are being held hostage. Police will immediately be dispatched to you home.

\* **Smoke detectors.** Your smoke detectors will monitored 24 hours per day and seven days a week.

\* **Carbon monoxide gas.** Monitored continually against this un-seen threat from leaks from build up in gas lines, fireplace or garage. Carbon monoxide is deadly and can strike at any time.

\* **Wireless technology.** Make sure to inquire about the benefits of wireless for you home. Many of the older security systems can be easily by passed. Wires suctioned on the windows can be easily removed, or the wires cut! You need wireless!



## HOME BURGLARY

### Resources

#### Websites

[WWW.crimedoctor.com/home.htm](http://WWW.crimedoctor.com/home.htm)

Chris E McGoey, CPP, CSP CAM

[WWW.Voices.yahoo.com](http://WWW.Voices.yahoo.com)

What to do if your home is burglarized.

Home Security System

[www.jcsd.org/burglary\\_prevention.htm](http://www.jcsd.org/burglary_prevention.htm)

Burglary prevention tips

[www.ehow.com/info\\_8210329\\_effects-burglary-victims.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_8210329_effects-burglary-victims.html)

Victims effects from burglary

[www.safetylca.org/s/safefact.asp](http://www.safetylca.org/s/safefact.asp)

Home Security Quiz

[www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp)

Office of neighborhood involvement crime prevention program.

[www.4elders.org/tips/articles/burglary.htm](http://www.4elders.org/tips/articles/burglary.htm)

Healthy Aging Partnership

Prepared by Patti Malanaphy for Oregon FCE

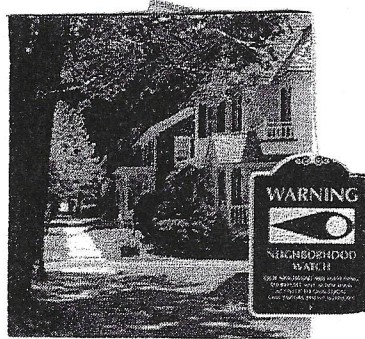


# HOW TO AVOID BEING BURGLARIZED



What you can do to protect yourself, and property.

Participant Handout



Developed by Patti Malanaphy

For

fce

Oregon Association for  
Family & Community Education



## Burglary Prevention

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**Remember the greatest weapons in the fight to prevent burglaries are light, time and noise.**

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### Light

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  - Consider buying motion-sensitive lights, which are now available at relatively low prices.
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Make it time-consuming for a burglar to break into your home by :

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- Get a dog. You don't need a large attack dog; even a small dog creates a disturbance that burglars would prefer to avoid. Remember to License and Vaccinate it.
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presence. Most systems can even summon local police directly. Don't forget to check the Alarm Code.

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### Just in Case...

Sometimes, all your efforts won't stop a determined burglar. It's wise to take some precautions that will help you get your property back should a criminal successfully break into your home:

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- Keep copies of your inventory list and receipts in a safe deposit box or with a friend. (This is also important in the event of a house fire.)
- Photographing and/or videotaping your possessions is a convenient way to keep a record of what you own.
- Engrave your valuables with an identification or mark to deter burglary and to prove ownership should the article be stolen and recovered by the police.
- Be sure you have the right coverage. You may need to purchase additional coverage to protect special items like expensive jewelry or rare antiques.
- If you don't own your home, seriously consider buying a renter's policy. Your landlord will generally not be responsible for your possessions. Rental coverage is available at competitive rates and these policies also offer important protection against liability and losses due to fire or storm damage.

You can also visit this related site from the United Kingdom for more useful information:

### Secured Home

Send mail to [Webmaster](#) with questions or comments about this web site.  
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Last modified: 05/02/12

**Safety Article:**

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## Seniors can take precautions to avoid becoming burglary victims

*by Jessica Leake*

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Most of us would assume taking a bus at 1 p.m. or going for a short walk to the store in broad daylight would be safe. Not lately.

The Seattle Police Department has reported more than 842 strong-arm robberies citywide since January of last year, many of them involving elderly Asian women. Some police officers in the South precinct have even spent time teaching older adults how to protect themselves on the streets.

The Healthy Aging Partnership, a coalition of some 35 nonprofit and public organizations dedicated to the health and well being of Puget Sound seniors, offers these tips to seniors to help avoid becoming victims of crime.

While it isn't always possible to walk in groups, before dark, or without a purse or wallet, it is possible to take important steps toward a much safer trip to the store or neighborhood park. One of the most important rules of thumb when it comes to safety is to be aware of your surroundings.

For example, when walking alone always look in front of you as well as behind you. If you notice someone following you, go to the nearest open business or pay phone and call the police. Always walk in well-lit areas and be familiar with the path you're taking.

## Here are some other things to consider for preventing crime:

- If you must carry a purse, hold it close to your body. Do not let it dangle by your side. Also, keep a wallet in a side pocket, rather than in the back.
- When taking the bus, sit close to the driver and be aware of who gets off the bus with you. Trust your instincts. If anyone seems suspicious, report them to the police.
- Avoid dark, unfamiliar or deserted routes - even if they are the shortest.
- Try to tell a family member where you are going and when you'll be back.
- Carry your car or house key between your index and middle finger as a quick weapon to fight off predators. This will also make for faster entry time once you arrive home.
- If someone stops you to ask for directions, answer from a distance. Do not approach the vehicle.
- Never display large sums of cash in public, especially at an ATM machine. Also, don't carry more cash than you need at one time.

Another tip for seniors to remember is to always report any crime or suspicious behavior done to you. Police say that many older adults are fearful of reporting criminal activities, and perpetrators are going unpunished.

The City of Seattle announced in late November an arrest of eight people for the robberies targeting elderly Asian women in the South Precinct. The Seattle City Council held a forum in December to discuss ways to prevent these crimes. The Police Department increased patrols and conducted undercover surveillance, which eventually led to the arrests.

If you have questions about safety prevention or any other issue related to life as an older adult, call the Healthy Aging Partnership's free and confidential information and assistance line at 1-888-4ELDERS (1-888-435-3377). HAP is generously supported by



Office of  
Neighborhood  
Involvement

*Promoting a culture of civic engagement by connecting and supporting all Portlanders working together and with government to build inclusive, safe and livable neighborhoods and communities.*

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This document is available at the  
ONI website:  
[www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp)

# Establishing Your Neighborhood Watch

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Crime Prevention Program  
Fall 2009

## What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a program designed to increase the safety and sense of community in neighborhoods by organizing and involving individuals and families in a united crime prevention effort. Neighborhood Watch participants learn how to:

- Communicate regularly with their neighbors using tools specific to Neighborhood Watch
- Recognize and report suspicious and criminal activity
- Increase home and vehicle security
- Increase personal safety of residents
- Make neighborhoods less attractive to criminals

When neighbors take the responsibility to build and maintain livable and cohesive neighborhoods, those neighborhoods are less vulnerable to crime. Under Neighborhood Watch, involved neighbors collaborate with the City's Crime Prevention Coordinators, police, neighborhood coalitions and associations, schools, parks personnel, area businesses, and others to create a united, secure, and peaceful community.

## Purpose of Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch has several purposes:

- **To help reduce crime and fear of crime in our neighborhoods.** When an organized Neighborhood Watch exists in an area, it can serve as a deterrent to criminal activity, as well as give residents a sense of safety so they can better enjoy their homes and neighborhoods.
- **To help ensure a prompt and effective response to neighborhood crime and livability problems.** Trained Neighborhood Watch members are in a good position to notice problems within a neighborhood, such as burglaries, vandalism, abandoned vehicles, illegal dump sites, evidence of drug dealing or manufacturing, and street prostitution, and they know where to report these problems in order to get a quicker, more effective solution.
- **To promote positive communication and relationships within a neighborhood.** Neighborhood Watch provides an avenue for neighbors to get to know one another and build a sense of community.

## Types of Neighborhood Watch

A Neighborhood Watch is often formed when neighbors notice a problem in the neighborhood, such as a suspected drug house or a series of burglaries. The Neighborhood Watch program can be applied to a number of different environments, such as residential streets,

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apartment buildings, college campuses, parks, and business districts. Different environments may call for some differences in organization and operation due to the different crime and livability issues that may be present and the agencies that might respond to these problems.

- *Neighborhood Watch*: The umbrella term for the program, and also the term for the program when it is applied in a single-family housing setting.
- *Apartment Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch in multi-family housing.
- *Campus Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch on a college or corporate campus.
- *Park Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch consisting of neighbors of a park who are focused on preventing crime at the park.
- *Business Watch*: A Neighborhood Watch in a business district, consisting of businesses.

## ***Starting a Neighborhood Watch***

Neighborhood Watches begin with a meeting at which the Crime Prevention Program Coordinator (CPPC) provides the training and materials you need to get started. Below are the steps to take to set up this initial meeting.

### **1. Talk to your CPPC**

Contact the CPPC for your neighborhood to tell him or her that you are interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch. Ask any questions you have about how to proceed. Phone numbers for CPPCs are at the end of this information sheet.

### **2. Ask a neighbor or two to help you**

If you already know some of your neighbors, recruit one or two of them to help you get your Neighborhood Watch up and running.

### **3. Find out about your neighbors' concerns**

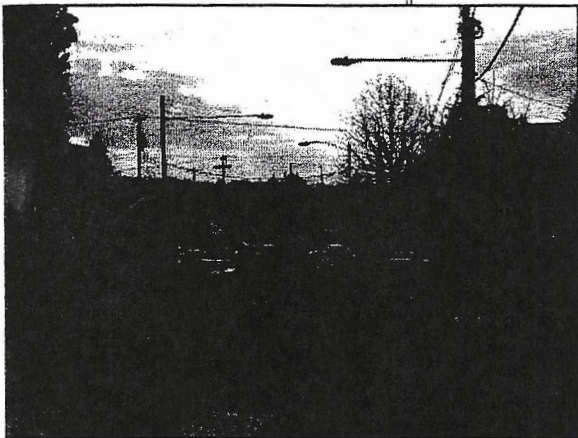
Talk with your neighbors, asking them about their crime concerns and about any other block issues they may have. They might provide you with information about suspicious activity on your block at this time. Also ask them about days of the week that would work for them to attend a meeting.

### **4. Decide what area you are going to organize**

At the minimum, invite the 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 where applicable. It is a good idea to start with your own block, then recruit people on surrounding blocks to organize their own blocks. If you are organizing within an apartment complex, invite at least all of the people in your building, and decide if you want to invite the people in adjacent buildings as well.

### **5. Decide the time, date, and location of the first meeting**

Usually Neighborhood Watch trainings are held on weekday evenings, and start around 6:30 - 7:00 p.m. Often meetings are held on your block in someone's home. Choose a meeting space that comfortably accommodates the neighbors you have invited. The initial meeting takes about two hours.



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### **6. Ask your CPPC to put the training date on his/her calendar**

Contact the CPPC two to three weeks in advance of your proposed meeting to ensure that he or she has this date and time available. Let him/her know the location of the meeting, the number of households expected and any concerns that your neighbors might have shared with you.

### **7. Deliver invitations to your neighbors**

Use written invitations to invite your neighbors. Distribute the invitations at least a week or two before the meeting. Try to make personal contact with every neighbor as well. This will increase the turnout to the meeting.

Although full block participation is ideal, there are times when a household on the block is suspected of engaging in illegal activity. If the participation of that household makes others reluctant to participate, it is not necessary to include that household.

### **8. Recruit neighbors to help with the meeting**

They may volunteer to help with refreshments, bring extra folding chairs, escort seniors to the meeting and assist you with contacting other neighbors and organizing the Neighborhood Watch.

### **9. Confirm and remind**

On the day of the meeting confirm the time and place with your CPPC. Have several block members help you remind the neighbors of the meeting to maximize turnout.

## ***Outline of the Neighborhood Watch training***

At your training, your CPPC will train your group in the following topics and give you the assistance and materials you need to start your group.

- Purpose of Neighborhood Watch
- Discussion of any crime issues of particular interest to group
- Organizing your Neighborhood Watch
- Roles within a Neighborhood Watch
- How to use Neighborhood Watch tools: block profile questionnaire, block profile form, block map, telephone tree
- Neighborhood Watch signs
- Recognizing and reporting suspicious activity
- 9-1-1 vs. non-emergency number
- Other resources for neighborhood problems
- Describing suspects and vehicles in a way that police can use the information
- Documenting suspicious and criminal activity
- How to improve the security of your home (inside and out) and the security of your vehicle
- Scenarios- how to deal with certain types of situations
- Maintaining your Neighborhood Watch in the long term
- Discussion and signing of volunteer agreements
- Selection of watch organizer
- Q & A



## ***Follow up training and meetings***

An active Neighborhood Watch often has members join after the initial training that happens when the watch forms. The Crime Prevention Program Coordinator (CPPC) will be happy to train new members of the Neighborhood Watch and do refresher trainings for people who are already members. When a Neighborhood Watch is experienced and established, the Neighborhood Watch organizer may do these trainings. The CPPC can provide the Neighborhood Watch organizer with materials to conduct the training.

It's a good idea for active Neighborhood Watches to set up regular meetings for members to discuss what they are seeing in their neighborhood. At a minimum, the group should meet annually. Many groups find it is more effective to meet more often. The CPPC or a police officer may be able to attend some of these meetings. Meetings are a good time to discuss how more members might be recruited, or any procedural decisions that need to be made. They are also a good time to have a short training on a topic of interest to members of your Neighborhood Watch that would help them better understand trends in crime and livability problems in their neighborhood. For example, additional training in homeless issues, gang activity, or domestic violence may be helpful. Talk to your CPPC about additional training you would like to have. He or she may be able to provide the training, or help you find a trainer on the topic.

El Programa de la Prevención del Crimen tiene un miembro que habla español. Llame por favor al número principal 503-823-4000 si usted necesita los servicios en español.

***The full Neighborhood Watch manual is available on the Office of Neighborhood Involvement website at [www.portlandonline.com/oni](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni). Follow the links for crime prevention. The manual contains more details about the tools and procedures of Neighborhood Watch.***

### **Crime Prevention Program Numbers**

*All numbers are area code 503*

Administrative Support .....	823-4064
Central Northeast .....	823-4098, 823-4763, 823-2779
East .....	823-3505, 823-5532, 823-2779, 823-4763
North.....	823-4098, 823-4094
Northeast.....	823-4763, 823-4764, 823-4098
Northwest .....	823-4257
Southeast .....	823-0540, 823-3432, 823-2781, 823-3505
Southwest.....	823-3131
Downtown.....	823-5852
Events and Training Supervisor.....	823-9666
Program Manager.....	823-2030

#### *Related services*

Liquor license notification .....	823-3092
Graffiti abatement.....	823-5860
Code enforcement hotline ( <i>noise, nuisance, inspections, etc.</i> )...	823-2633
Neighborhood mediation .....	823-3152
City/County information & referral .....	823-4000

## HOME SECURITY SYSTEM

### What You Will Need.

If you are going to purchase a home security system for your house, make sure that you get all that you will need, for complete security! Here are the protections that you will need to get!

\* **Burglar alarms.** Glass and door sensors. Glass-break technology installed on your windows will sound alarm when it's broken or tampered with. Entry doors, install sensors that will alert you if opened.

\* **Timer lights.** Lights, those are preprogrammed to go on and off with a switch. Burglars hate light.

\* **Hostage panic button.** A special code can be entered for a no-call back to verify the burglary, and that you are being held hostage. Police will immediately be dispatched to you home.

\* **Smoke detectors.** Your smoke detectors will monitored 24 hours per day and seven days a week.

\* **Carbon monoxide gas.** Monitored continually against this un-seen threat from leaks from build up in gas lines, fireplace or garage. Carbon monoxide is deadly and can strike at any time.

\* **Wireless technology.** Make sure to inquire about the benefits of wireless for you home. Many of the older security systems can be easily by passed. Wires suctioned on the windows can be easily removed, or the wires cut! You need wireless!



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- Information
  - Training
  - Services
  - Database
- Membership
  - Multimedia Development
  - Traffic Division
  - Occupational Division

**Membership**

- ▶ Members A-Z
- ▶ Membership Benefits
- ▶ Membership Savings and Cost
- ▶ Safety Council LOGO for Members

**Multimedia Development**

- ▶ Customers
- ▶ Multimedia Examples
- ▶ Who to Contact

**Traffic Division**

- ▶ Driving Programs
- ▶ Traffic Court Courses

**Occupational Division**

- ▶ Gulf Coast Occupational Medicine
- ▶ Pocket Toolbox
- ▶ Site Safety Audits
- ▶ Custom Training and Curricula
- ▶ Certificate Programs

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# HOME SECURITY QUIZ

## How safe is *your* home?

TRUE OR FALSE:

1. Sliding glass doors often have weak locks.
2. Most home burglaries occur between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.
3. More than 90% of burglars say they would avoid breaking into a home with an alarm.
4. Installing motion-activated outdoor floodlights is a good safety idea.
5. You shouldn't call the police unless you're certain there is a crime.
6. You should have mail held at the post office when you leave town.
7. Don't leave any trash in your outdoor receptacles when you go on vacation.
8. It's a good idea to use an etching tool to mark your valuables with your driver's license number and state abbreviation.
9. You should close all curtains and shades when you are not home.
10. Safety chains are a good form of security for your home.
11. Growing tall, thick bushes helps protect your home from burglars.
12. Installing a deadbolt lock on your garage helps keep out thieves.
13. You should never keep a spare key in the mailbox, under the doormat or above the .....doorway.



1. Sliding glass doors often have weak locks. **TRUE** - INSTALLING A BOLT LOCK WILL HELP PREVENT THE DOOR FROM BEING SLID OPEN OR LIFTED OUT OF ITS TRACK.
2. Most home burglaries occur between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. **FALSE** - MOST HOME BURGLARIES OCCUR BETWEEN 8 AM AND 5 PM.
3. More than 90% of burglars say they would avoid breaking into a home with an alarm. **TRUE** - AN ALARM SYSTEM IS AN EXCELLENT DETERRENT TO CRIME.
4. Installing motion-activated outdoor floodlights is a good safety idea. **TRUE** - MAKE SURE THESE ARE PLACED WHERE BURGLARS CAN'T EASILY TAMPER WITH THEM.
5. You shouldn't call the police unless you're certain there is a crime. **FALSE** - NOTIFY THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY OF ANY SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE, TRUCKS OR CARS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. DON'T WORRY ABOUT BEING A NUISANCE. THE POLICE WILL WELCOME YOUR CALL AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PREVENT A BURGLARY.
6. You should have mail held at the post office when you leave town. **TRUE** - FULL MAILBOXES MAKE IT CLEAR TO BURGLARS THAT NO ONE IS HOME.
7. Don't leave any trash in your outdoor receptacles when you go on vacation. **FALSE** - BURGLARS LOOK FOR EMPTY OUTDOOR GARBAGE CANS, KNOWING THAT OCCUPIED HOMES PRODUCE GARBAGE AT LEAST EVERY FEW DAYS. WHEN YOU'RE AWAY FROM HOME, HAVE A NEIGHBOR PUT SOME TRASH IN YOUR RECEPTICLES OR, IF YOUR GARBAGE IS PICKED UP CURBSIDE, HAVE THEM PUT A FEW BAGS IN FRONT OF YOUR HOUSE.
8. It's a good idea to use an etching tool to mark your valuables with your driver's license number and state abbreviation. **TRUE** - THIS HELPS POLICE IDENTIFY YOUR PROPERTY AND MAKES THE VALUABLES HARDER FOR THE THIEF TO SELL. THE ETCHING TOOL IS A MINOR EXPENSE, AND MANY LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS WILL EVEN LEND THEM TO YOU FOR FREE.
9. You should close all curtains and shades when you are not home. **FALSE** - LEAVE YOUR CURTAINS SLIGHTLY PARTED. DRAPES OR SHADES THAT ARE FULLY CLOSED GIVE A DESERTED LOOK TO A HOME OR APARTMENT.
10. Safety chains are a good form of security for your home. **FALSE** - SAFETY CHAINS CAN BE BROKEN EASILY WITH FORCE. DRILL A PEEPHOLE IN YOUR DOOR INSTEAD.
11. Growing tall, thick bushes helps protect your home from burglars. **FALSE** - TRIM YOUR TREES AND SHRUBS SO BURGLARS HAVE FEWER PLACES TO HIDE.
12. Installing a deadbolt lock on your garage helps keep out thieves. **TRUE** - KEEPING YOUR GARAGE LOCKED IS AS IMPORTANT AS KEEPING YOUR HOME LOCKED, ESPECIALLY IF THE GARAGE IS ATTACHED. ONCE INSIDE THE GARAGE, A BURGLAR CAN WORK UNINTERRUPTED AT GETTING INTO YOUR HOUSE.
13. You should never keep a spare key in the mailbox, under the doormat or above the doorway. **TRUE** - THESE ARE THE FIRST PLACES THIEVES LOOK.

NOTE: This quiz is intended to help improve your knowledge about burglary prevention.

## HOME BURGLARY

### Resources

#### Websites

[WWW.crimedoctor.com/home.htm](http://WWW.crimedoctor.com/home.htm)

Chris E McGoey, CPP, CSP CAM

[WWW.Voices.yahoo.com](http://WWW.Voices.yahoo.com)

What to do if your home is burglarized.

Home Security System

[www.jcsd.org/burglary\\_prevention.htm](http://www.jcsd.org/burglary_prevention.htm)

Burglary prevention tips

[www.ehow.com/info\\_8210329\\_effects-burglary-victims.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_8210329_effects-burglary-victims.html)

Victims effects from burglary

[www.safetylca.org/s/safefact.asp](http://www.safetylca.org/s/safefact.asp)

Home Security Quiz

[www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/cp)

Office of neighborhood involvement crime prevention program.

[www.4elders.org/tips/articles/burglary.htm](http://www.4elders.org/tips/articles/burglary.htm)

Healthy Aging Partnership

Prepared by Patti Malanaphy for Oregon FCE