

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH



BEAVERTON POLICE
DEPARTMENT



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighborhood Watch is a program designed to increase neighborhood livability by reducing crime and the fear of crime by active residents' participation.



By organizing a Neighborhood Watch you will:

- 1. Become familiar with your neighbors and activities on the block.**
- 2. Be able to recognize and report suspicious activity.**
- 3. Learn ways to make your home and yourself a "hard target."**
- 4. Become part of a block map and telephone tree system.**
- 5. Promote a positive open relationship between the Law Enforcement community and your neighborhood.**



The City of Beaverton Neighborhood Watch Program

Since its inception, Neighborhood Watch has been proven to be an effective means for getting residents to take positive steps to protect themselves and their neighbors against crime. A Neighborhood Watch program is the logical first step for any neighborhood organizing against crime; it requires minimal effort and gets people talking to and caring about one another. The information in this packet is designed to assist you in learning the steps you can take to make your home more secure against crime and to show how you and your neighbors can work together to protect the entire neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The establishment of a strong Neighborhood Association Program in Beaverton has served as a vehicle for establishing Neighborhood Watch in many Beaverton neighborhoods. Though active participation in your Neighborhood Association is not a must for setting up an effective Neighborhood Watch, the program has proven to be especially strong in neighborhoods which are active in the Neighborhood Association Program as well.



What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a crime prevention program that:

- Teaches residents techniques to reduce the risk of being victimized at home and in public.
- Trains residents about the importance of recognizing suspicious activities and how to report them.
- Teaches participants how to make their homes more secure and properly identify their belongings.
- Allows neighbors to get to know each other and their routines so that any out of place activity can be reported and investigated.
- A group of concerned residents addressing issues that concern the entire community.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

What Neighborhood Watch Is Not

- A vigilante force working outside the normal procedures of law enforcement.
- A program designed for participants to take personal risks to prevent crime.
- A 100 percent guarantee that crime will not occur in your neighborhood.

Benefits of Neighborhood Watch

- A Neighborhood Watch program, whether it is a high crime area or not, will have many rewards for you and your family.
- Neighborhood Watch programs are known to instill a greater sense of security, well being, and reduce the fear of crime in your community. This program also creates a greater “sense of community” and puts the neighbor back in neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Watch brings law enforcement and the community together as a team to reduce crime in your area.

Other benefits include:

- Reducing the risk of being a crime victim. The risk is reduced because participants are taught how to take preventative 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, personal assault, and fraud also decrease.
- Being better prepared to respond to a suspicious activity. Part of the Neighborhood Watch program is learning how to report suspicious activities occurring in your neighborhood and what law enforcement officers need when a crime is being reported and why.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

- Greater access to criminal activity information. Neighborhood Watch programs are designed to keep participants informed of crime trends and patterns so they are better prepared to spot any crime activity and stop it in their neighborhood. For current crime statistics in your neighborhood, please visit the Beaverton Police Department website at www.beavertonpolice.org.
- Obtaining a Neighborhood Watch sign to post in your neighborhood. Criminals know that if a neighborhood has a Neighborhood Watch sign posted, that neighborhood is not an easy target. They have taken the necessary steps to deter crime in their neighborhoods that have Neighborhood Watch signs posted. After purchasing an approved sign, please contact the City's Public Works Department at 503-526-2225 to install the sign. Signs can be purchased on the national Neighborhood Watch website at <https://www.nnwi.org/neighborhood-watch-signs>
- Knowing your neighbors. Neighborhood Watch promotes getting to know your neighbors and their patterns so that you notice and report any activity that doesn't fit with regular schedules. This means that when you're away, you can feel more secure about your property.
- Reducing the fear of crime and making your neighborhood more livable. Neighborhood Watch increases the number of arrests and convictions by serving as a network for law enforcement and the community to communicate effectively about crime in their neighborhood.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Your Neighborhood Survey

Crime feeds off apathy and neighbors not knowing or caring for their community. The following questions can help you assess how connected you are to your neighborhood and surrounding community. Neighborhood Watch helps develop a sense of belonging in your neighborhood. If after answering the questions below you feel you have little sense of belonging to your own neighborhood, creating or joining a Neighborhood Watch can help create a neighborhood you feel happy to come home to.

- How many of your neighbors do you know?
- Do you and your neighbors watch each other's homes when one of you is away?
- Do you know when your neighbors are out of town? Do they know when you are gone?
- How many of your neighbors would bring you food if a family member died or you were very sick? How many would even know?
- If someone were breaking into your neighbor's home, would you call the Police Department? Would your neighbors call if they saw someone breaking into your home? The question really is do you and your neighbors care enough about each other to get involved if there is trouble? Do you inform your neighbors of suspicious activity? Do you even notice suspicious activity?
- Where is your support network? Is there anyone in your neighborhood that you could turn to for help in an emergency?
- Would you get a cup of sugar from a neighbor or would you go to the store?
- Do you know as much about your neighborhood and community as you do about national problems?

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Know Your Neighbors



One of the first steps of Neighborhood Watch is getting to know your neighbors. Whether you prefer to do so at a block meeting or one-on-one is up to you, but it is important that you share information about the composition of your households and activities. By doing so you make it easier for your neighbors to recognize and respond to suspicious activities when they occur. Give only as much information as you are comfortable sharing, but remember, it is important that you too are part of the information network. To "profile" your block, share with your neighbors the following information:

- **Names** of household members
- **Address**
- **Make, models, colors & license numbers** of vehicles
- **Pets** (Does a barking dog indicate an intruder?)
- **Medical Problems** (It is helpful to note medical problems so the most appropriate response may be made in case of emergencies.)
- **Hours** - Does someone in the home work varied hours or graveyard shift?

The security of the neighborhood and its residents depends upon the people themselves. You and your neighbors are the ones who really know what is going on in your neighborhood. No police department can effectively protect life and property without the support and cooperation of the residents it serves. Police need your eyes and ears. Every resident should be a Neighborhood Watch member... a concerned, public-spirited person who watches his or her neighborhood and reports criminal activity to their local law enforcement agency.

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Methods that you can use to share information with your neighbors:

Block Map: This gives you a visual perspective of your block. It's a handy way to remember who lives where and makes it easy to explain the layout of your block to the 911 operator. Sample provided on page 9.

Block Profile: A more detailed record of your block's composition. It includes information such as work schedules, emergency phone numbers, email addresses, types of vehicles and block skills. Sample provided on page 10.

Telephone Tree: An effective method for sharing information between neighbors. Each neighbor is responsible for calling one or two other block members when problems arise. You can also start a neighborhood text group for fast communication.

Email Group: This allows you to update the neighborhood with the touch of a button. Bulletins may be sent to the neighborhood group regarding any notifications or recent criminal or suspicious activity.

Nextdoor App: Nextdoor has partnered with Neighborhood Watch and offers a free virtual neighborhood watch guide. You can locate this information via Nextdoor or on the National Neighborhood Watch site. <https://nnw.org/nextdoor>



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

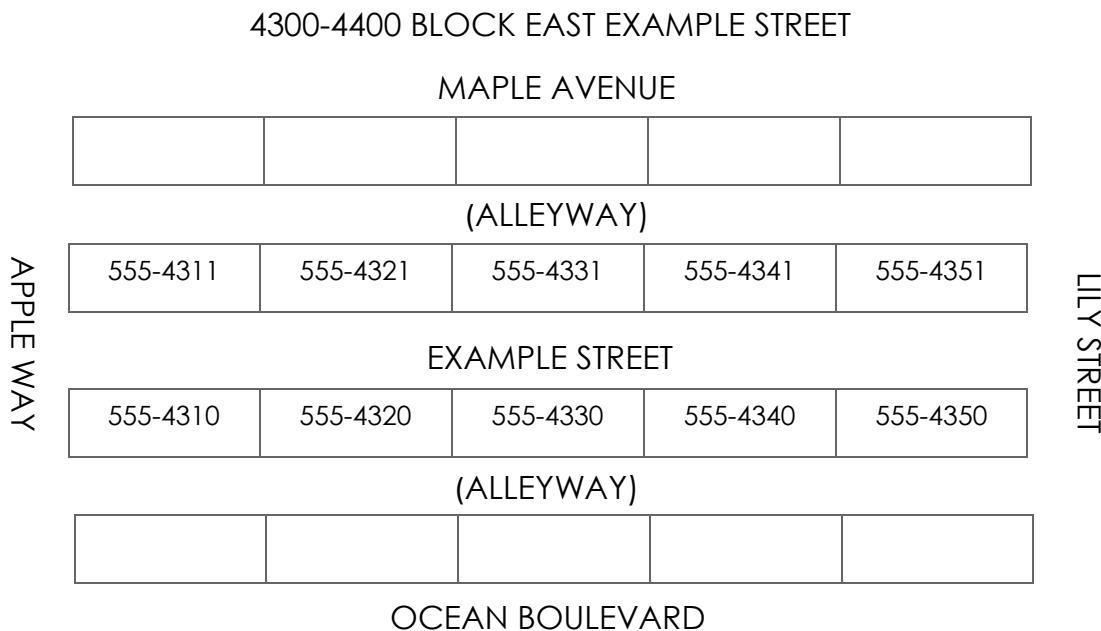
Sample Block Maps

Be sure to include the following on your block map:

- House color
- House number—Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street. This makes it easier for police, medical personnel and others to identify the correct house.
- Name of residents
- Telephone numbers—Home number, work number and cell numbers of each resident.
- Street names and numbers
- Directional compass

You may also want to use symbols (dots or stars) or color coding to indicate which homes have alarms, work schedules (so you know where there are gaps in “watchers”) or other pertinent information.

Consider your block map as a part of your security; keep it in a safe place where strangers will not see it.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Block Home Profile Form

House Number & Color	Name & Ages of Household Members	Phone Numbers: home, work, cell,	Car makes, colors, & license numbers	Pets	Medical Issues	Emergency Contact

This is a sample of the form that can be used to help compile a profile of your block.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Telephone/Email Tree Information

A phone/email tree is a tool that provides a means of rapid communication on a block. One of the most important aspects of a successful Neighborhood Watch is open communication among neighbors. The telephone/email tree helps provide a communication network.

What is it used for?

- Neighborhood meeting reminders.
- To inform neighbors of suspicious activity or a crime in the neighborhood.
- Prevention information for crimes that have been occurring in the neighborhood.
- Suspect description/information to help apprehend a person.
- Any other reason that your group finds it necessary or convenient to communicate and pass on important neighborhood information.

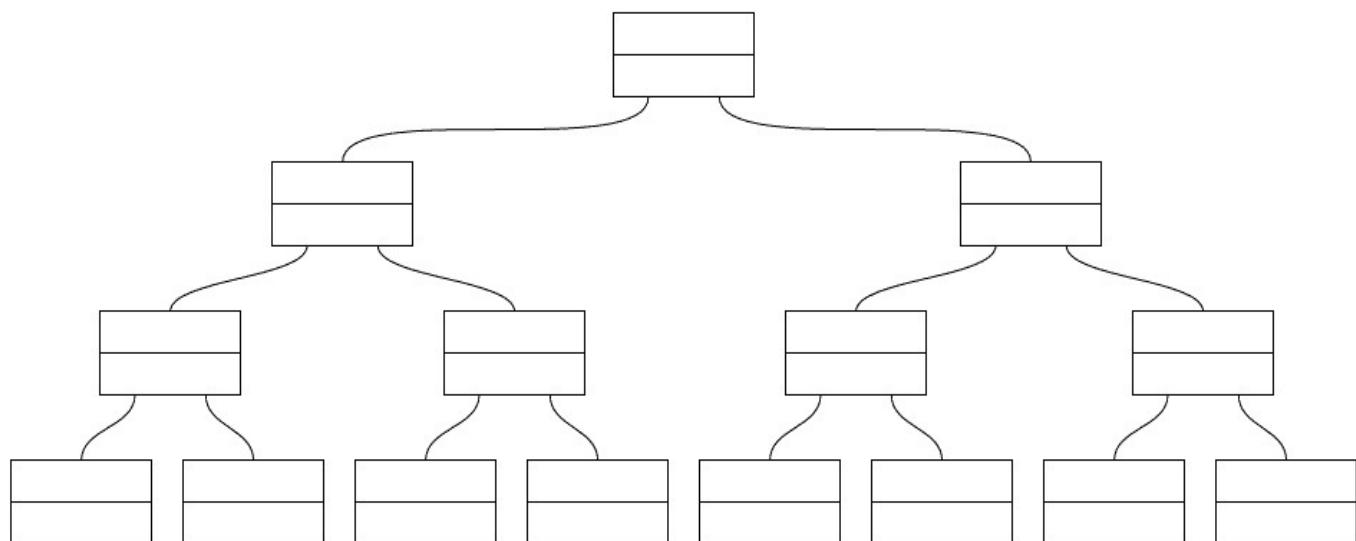
How do you set-up a phone tree?

The Neighborhood Watch leader should be at the top of the tree. The people who are least likely to be home, or hard to get a hold of should be toward the bottom. There may be someone in your neighborhood who does not want to give their number out to the entire group (each member of the group will receive a copy). In this case, assign that person to someone that they are willing to give their number to and do not have them responsible for calling anyone else (this means that one person may be calling three people). Alternatively people may opt to be notified only by email rather than by telephone. You may want to organize the tree so that the people calling one another live near each other, can see a common area, or can be randomly set up. New members of the group should be added onto the bottom, so as not to disrupt the entire tree.

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How Do You Use It?

When a group member has information that needs to be passed on, call the person at the top of the tree. After you are called, call the people that you have been assigned. After the person on the bottom of the tree gets the information, they should call the person at the top to inform them that the process was completed. If your contact person is not at home, you are unable to leave a message, or know they will not be able to call soon, call the people below them also. Email contact lists will be sufficient for general notifications, and the more urgent matters handled by the phone tree.



How To Use Your Telephone Tree

1. Please call the person at the top of the tree if you have any crime problems or information to share.
2. When you receive a call, call the next person under you. If they aren't home, call the next one down the line. Continue to try to contact those who aren't home. The households at the bottom of the tree should call the person at the top to indicate that they received the message.
3. If you see suspicious activity, be sure to call 911 before you activate the phone tree.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Steps to Organizing a Neighborhood Watch

1. Determine the area you want to organize. This should be the area you consider your “neighborhood.”
2. Talk to neighbors to get a feel for the level of interest in the program, and at the same time ask what times are best to hold an informational meeting.
3. Determine where the initial meeting will be held. At your home? Another home? Or other public place, i.e. school, city meeting room, etc. (If you hold meetings at a home on your street, attendance is generally better.)
4. Follow up your verbal invitation with a written announcement two weeks prior to the meeting date. The most effective way to do this is to hand deliver the announcements to your neighbors and ask if they will attend. Get names and phone numbers if possible to make reminder calls later.
5. At a minimum, invite neighbors who have fairly direct view of each other's houses or apartments.
6. Prepare handouts. You can obtain a map of your street from the City Engineering Office prior to the meeting, map your neighborhood using Google maps or another online mapping system or you can make your own; as shown on page 9 of this booklet. Plat maps are also available from title companies for a nominal charge. If you tell them what the map is for, they may offer it at no charge.
7. Plan on the meeting lasting at least one to two hours. At the meeting you will:
 - Identify neighborhood concerns and develop an action plan
 - Learn crime prevention techniques such as home security, personal safety, and operation identification
 - Learn how to report suspicious activity
 - Meet your neighbors and establish a communication (telephone/email tree)
9. Once your meeting has been organized, maintaining interest in Neighborhood Watch is important. It is easy to forget to keep the vigilance we thought was so important in the beginning. Some groups maintain interest by planning neighborhood outings or meetings and distributing a periodic Neighborhood Watch newsletter.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Maintaining Your Neighborhood Watch

Stable neighborhoods result from people caring and sharing. Such neighborhoods experience fewer crime problems. When Neighborhood Watch networks organize around crime concerns, enthusiasm is usually high and participation is good. A few months later, the excitement dies down and communication often sags.

The following list of suggested projects to help keep your Neighborhood Watch Program running was compiled from active Neighborhood Watch participants. Add your own ideas to this list based on the composition and interests of your neighborhood. Choose the ones appropriate for your group and have fun!

Group Material Buying—Many nurseries, building supply businesses, etc. will give customers a discount on large orders.

Carpooling—Share a ride to work, downtown, shopping malls, etc. with a neighbor or two.

Winter Emergency Planning—Develop a game plan for winter emergencies. Who has a gas stove? Four wheel drive vehicle? Does anyone have special needs? Identify the resources on your block.

Thanksgiving or Other Holiday Dinners—Ask a neighborhood church or community center for use of space for a multi-family celebration. Share the work and cost.

Progressive Dinners—Hors d'eouvres at one house, salad at the next, soup, main course, etc. Each house has a responsibility for one course. The party moves from house to house.

Block Garden—A resident with unused garden space can let others use it in exchange for produce. Celebrate with a harvest festival.

Exercise or Walking Groups—It's easier to pursue fitness with a companion at a regular time. Organize a weight loss competition, perhaps one side of the street vs. the other. Celebrate with a low calorie potluck.

Support Groups—Young mothers, single parents or seniors may benefit from meeting to share concerns and solutions.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Holiday Activities—Share putting up decorations on each other's homes. Celebrate by gathering the neighbors for an evening stroll to admire area lights.

Child Care Co-op—With the aid of your block map and telephone tree, organize a co-op. Parents and children both benefit.

Work Parties—Painting, insulating, housecleaning, shoveling snow, etc. can be easier, faster and cheaper if neighbors with similar needs do things together.

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

Kids' Parade—If your block has a lot of kids, show them off with a children's parade. Close off your block for the event (Please call the Mayor's office at **503-256-2497** for information on special permits needed). Neighborhood merchants may be willing to donate soft drinks, treats, and prizes.

Sign Posting Party—Celebrate community spirit by arranging a party for posting your sign telling the world that crime will not be tolerated. Let the Neighborhood Watch symbol remind neighbors of the commitment you have made to each other to be watchful and responsive.

Booster Meeting—Invite a crime prevention specialist for a follow up meeting to help strengthen your resolve in keeping the block crime free. Speakers on various crime prevention topics are available.

Telephone Reassurance—Establish a system whereby any seniors or shut-ins are telephoned at regular intervals to make certain that everything is all right.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Safety Tips

- Have inside lights set on timers to come on at dusk. Arriving home to a dark house and then turning on lights lets anyone watching know you are home alone in the house. Have several timers—the more lights, the more occupied the home looks.
- Outside lights should come on automatically too. Use “photo cells,” “sun sensors” or timers to keep exterior lights on, or keep good habits of turning these lights on. Remember it gets dark by 5 p.m. during the winter months. Check lights periodically to make sure they are in tightly—if they are out upon arrival, that should be considered suspicious.
- If you park away from the house and the lights are out, carry a flashlight and use it as you approach the house.
- Shrubbery should be trimmed down to two feet and trees trimmed up to six feet from the ground. This will make it difficult for someone to hide on your property.
- If you park in a garage, enter with car doors locked and check the interior of the garage before getting out of the car. Pay close attention to what is happening at the sides of the garage entry as you pull in.
- Always lock your doors and windows. Interior doors from the garage are often forgotten. Make sure this door remains locked as well.
- A horn is a great attention getting device if you need one. Car alarms can also act as personal alarms.
- Carry your keys in your hand as you approach your house. They can be used as a weapon, if attacked—they won’t inflict a lot of pain or do much harm, but they will surprise an attacker and maybe give you enough time to run away.
- When entering your home, announce your arrival, “Hi, I’m home!” When leaving, “Be back soon!” This makes anyone observing the home think that you are not alone.
- Don’t leave your house door open when carrying packages between the house and the car.
- Check the exterior of the house in the daytime for any evidence that someone may have been on the property—footprints, crushed shrubbery, cigarette stubs, etc. Stay on top of it regularly.
- Do not hide a spare set of keys outside your home.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Suspicious Activity

It may not be obvious what crime may be associated with suspicious activity. Often suspicious acts are perfectly legitimate, but sometimes they are not. It is better to be on the safe side, instead of thinking, "If only I had called when I saw/heard it."

Circumstance	Possible Crime	Circumstance	Possible Crime
Person knocking on front doors in residential area, especially if they go to the rear area of the house.	Someone may be casing the house to see if anyone is home. Possible burglary suspect or trespasser.	Unusual noise such as gunshots, a loud bang or pop, or breaking sounds.	Possible crime in progress such as burglary, weapons violation, assault or theft.
Person screaming	Possible assault, kidnapping or domestic violence.	Broken glass, house or car door left open.	A theft or burglary may have occurred.
Person offering items for sale at a low price.	Someone trying to sell stolen property.	Abandoned vehicle parked on your block.	Possible stolen vehicle
Person loitering around cars, going car to car and peering into them.	Possible car thief or car prowler.	Frequent guests to a residence that stay for a short period of time during all times of the day.	Dealing of drugs, stolen property or prostitution.
Parked vehicle with person(s) sitting in it for a long period of time.	Possible lookouts for a crime in progress or someone waiting to commit a crime.	People in similar clothing, emblems, colors, tattoos, involved in criminal or suspicious activity.	Gang activity
Person loitering or driving through a neighborhood several times at a slow speed.	Possible burglary suspects or vandals.	Someone running in non-athletic clothing possibly with a piece of property.	Person who has just committed a crime or is the victim of an attempted assault.
Vehicle being loaded with valuables by someone who does not live in the residence.	Possible burglary or theft in progress.	A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms.	Person may be under the influence of drugs, injured, or in need of medical attention.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

You can help the police department by preparing what you are going to say regarding suspicious activity and non-emergency calls. How the activity is communicated can often bring about a more favorable response.

For example: Two residents, both adjacent to a house where drug activity was suspected, called the non-emergency dispatch when the resident drove away from the house because he was felony suspended—meaning if he was caught driving he would be taken into custody.

- The first resident wrote down what she would say and when calling gave her name, address, what the situation was, why she was calling, vehicle plate and the driver's direction of travel. This information was immediately given to an area patrol car.
- The second resident would call and immediately say, "He is leaving again." The dispatcher had to spend a good amount of time finding out what was going on and why the person was calling the police for help. By that time the driver was well out of the area and the information was of no use.

In this scenario, both residents wanted the same thing, but they communicated the situation in different ways, getting a very different response.

Calling the Police Department for Service

For police assistance call either **911** or the non-emergency dispatch at **503-629-0111**. Washington County uses a dispatch system. The dispatchers relay your information to on duty officers via radio and computer. Calls for service are based on the immediacy of the situation (potential for a life endangering situation and property and person crimes in progress, for these call **911**). "Cold" calls, concerning a crime that has already been committed, are low priority calls. Call the Non-emergency number for these reports. If it is a cold call, you may be told an officer will call you by phone to get information or the dispatcher may take all the necessary information. When calling the police, it is important to remember that your call will be answered when an officer is available and be based on the priority. A dispatcher bases a decision on many factors such as the number of officers on shift, the number of available officers, the potential for a situation to escalate, and the immediacy of the issue.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

BEAVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT PHONE NUMBERS

Emergency Calls	911
Beaverton Police Department non-emergency	503-629-0111
General Information/Records	503-526-2260
Property and Evidence	503-526-2483
Community Services Division	503-526-2352

General Guidelines

- **Know** what is supposed to be happening in your neighborhood. This will help you determine what is suspicious.
- **Trust** your instincts. Do not second-guess yourself. If something does not seem right, do not dismiss the event by thinking, "I don't want to bother anyone."
- **Call** in a timely manner.
- **Do not investigate** on your own. Never approach anyone alone.
- **Watch** for details such as clothing worn, direction of travel, age, height, weight, license plate number, state and vehicle description. Take a picture with your phone if you can do it safely. Do not guess or assume what has happened. Tell the officer only what you have seen. If you are communicating secondhand information, let the officer know that.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Protecting Your Home While You Are Away

- Tell your neighbors, those beside you and those across the street, when you will be gone. Be sure that someone in the neighborhood knows where you will be and how to get ahold of you. Of course, inform only those people you trust. If someone from outside the neighborhood will be taking care of your home, let a neighbor know who is allowed to be there. Also, if any service people will be working on the house while you are gone, let a neighbor know.
- Make sure your house looks lived in, not empty. Stop the mail and cancel all deliveries or ask a friend to pick them up each day. Put an automatic timer on several lights and the radio. Have a neighbor keep your property maintained. Making your home look lived in may mean adjusting your habits when you are at home so that someone cannot tell your whereabouts by looking at your house.
- Store valuables and a list of property serial numbers in a safe deposit box.
- Put a business or relative's address in your baggage, not your home address. Often people look at the addresses on baggage and target those homes because they are known to be vacant.
- Lock all windows and doors. Double-check basement and garage doors before you leave.
- Request a free Vacation Check Survey from the Beaverton Police Department. A request form can be obtained online. The form needs to be completed and submitted at least 72 hours prior to the desired start of the vacation check. The duration of the vacation check will be no more than 3 weeks but no less than 1 week. Vacation checks are performed as time allows. <https://www.beavertonpolice.org/236/Vacation-Check-Program>

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Vehicle Safety

Vehicle break-ins and theft are often crimes of opportunity. Vehicles are targeted if they are left unlocked, keys in the vehicle, and valuables are left in plain sight. You may be able to prevent a crime to your vehicle by making a habit of the following precautions:

- **Always** lock your vehicle no matter how short your absence.
- **Never** leave your car running unattended, even if it is in your driveway.
- **Do not** leave your children in a car unattended, even for a few minutes.
- **Do not** leave children or pets in vehicles. Temperatures may soar inside your car, even on moderate days.
- **Consider** your vehicle to be a display case. What are you putting on display? Keep all valuables out of sight or out of the car.
- **Make sure** your windows are rolled up tightly.
- **Do not** hide spare keys on your vehicle.
- **Park** in well-lit areas.

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Your Safety While Driving

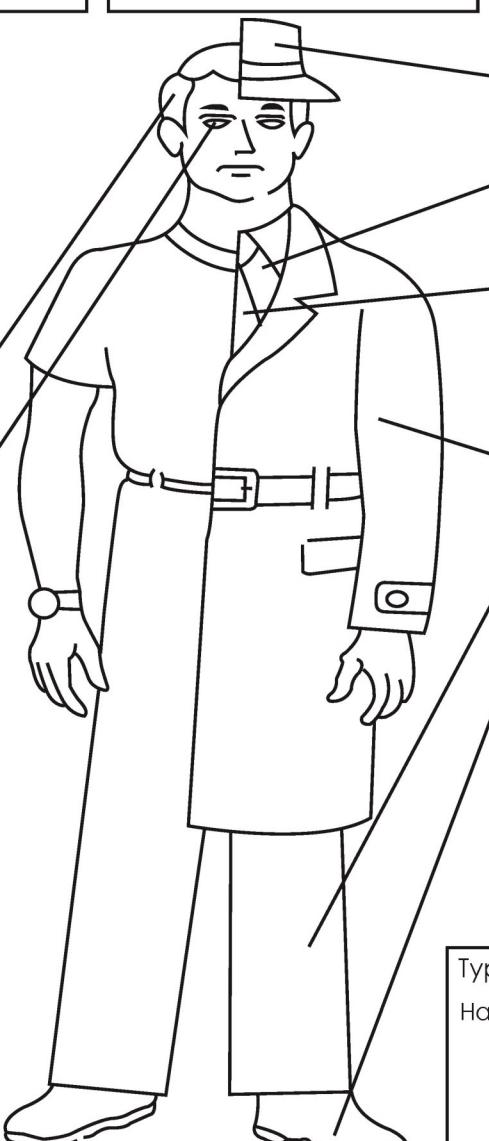
- When entering your car, have your key ready and survey your surroundings for people. If there is someone suspicious near, leave and come back later. If you use a key fob activate your locks when you are ready to open the door. If you are alone, only unlock the driver side door.
- If you are bumped by another vehicle, motion to the driver to follow you to a populated, well-lit area. Try to get a description of the driver, vehicle, and license plate number.
- Keep the doors locked at all times. When traveling at slow speeds or stopped in an undesirable area, keep your windows rolled up. Do not keep valuables, such as your purse or wallet, on the dash or the passenger seat.
- Keep your passenger side doors locked at the gas station. Thieves may steal passenger side valuables while your attention is diverted.
- Keep your vehicle in good working order to prevent your vehicle from breaking down in an undesirable area.
- Keep a sign in your car that reads, "Call the Police" in case you break down. Do not accept help from a stranger, ask that they call the police. If you have a flat tire and are in an undesirable area, keep moving at a slow pace until you get to a safer place.
- When you are traveling into a new area or undesirable part of town, fill your gas tank prior to traveling.
- When driving, be aware of your surroundings. Avoid boxing yourself into an area where you cannot move. Leave ample room in front of you (you should be able to see the other cars rear tires). This will allow you to be able to move your vehicle, either to drive away or to draw attention to yourself.

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HELP CATCH A THIEF

FILL IN ALL BLANKS AND GIVE TO THE FIRST POLICE OFFICER ON THE SCENE

Vehicle License Make	Color	Direction of Escape	Method of Escape <input type="checkbox"/> Foot <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle
Race Sex			Hat (color, type, etc.)
Age			Shirt
Height			Tie
Weight			Coat
Hair			Pants
Eyes			Shoes
Scars, Marks, Tattoos			REPORT CRIME IMMEDIATELY!
REMARKS		Speak clearly... Stay on telephone...	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		DON'T HANG UP!	
		Type of Weapon Hand Gun <input type="checkbox"/>  Shot Gun <input type="checkbox"/> 	





CONTACT INFORMATION

Beaverton Police Department

6125 SW Hall Blvd.

Beaverton, OR 97076

Community Resource Officer

Phone: 503-526-2352, press 7

