



Welcome to Neighborhood Watch

"Neighbors Watching Out For Neighbors"



Sheriff Ty Trenary, Snohomish County Sheriff's Office
neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org | 425-388-7375 | <http://sheriff.snoco.org>



I'm Sheriff Ty Trenary, and I'd like to welcome you as a partner to our Neighborhood Watch program.

The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office stands ready to work with you and your neighbors to keep the peace in our community.

Crime prevention works. It helps reduce the risk to you, your families, and your home. It also reduces fear, which can sometimes be as harmful to a community as crime itself.

Follow the guidelines in this booklet, and make the effort to organize your neighborhood. It will take a bit of time and energy in the beginning, but you'll see long-term benefits.

Welcome to Neighborhood Watch!
Let's get started!



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The Benefits of Neighborhood Watch

- Reduces your risk of becoming a crime victim, by teaching you preventive measures.
- Trains you how to observe and report suspicious behavior.
- Gets you acquainted with neighbors and helps you address issues of mutual interest.
- Keeps you informed of criminal activity in your area.
- Teaches you how to get rid of neighborhood nuisances.
- Gives you a greater sense of security, because you know that your neighbors are watching out for you.
- Improves communication between neighborhoods and the deputies who serve them.
- Empowers and strengthens your neighborhood.

What is Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is a plan . . . a philosophy . . . an approach to living peacefully, with the goal of creating a safer community.

First we want to help you solve your immediate problems—to get rid of the speeders on your street, to handle troublesome juveniles, or perhaps to deal with a drug house in your area.

But our sights are also on something bigger. We want to build a network of concerned, involved citizens who will partner with the Sheriff's Office to keep the peace in Snohomish County . . . because we can't do it without you. It's simply not possible for us to keep a deputy on every corner, nor would you want us to. We're not a police state.

Neighborhood Watch is built upon the notion that crime prevention is a shared responsibility. Deputies are paid to work against crime on a full-time basis. But citizens also need to get involved to:

- report crime when they see it,
- get to know their neighbors, and
- do everything they can to take away the opportunity for crime to occur in their neighborhoods.

Deputies may look like they're powerful; they carry the guns and big sticks. But citizens are actually much more powerful if they get organized and cooperate with each other.

Neighborhood Watch is based on this concept of cooperation, and statistics show that it works. When a concerned citizenry does its part, the results are positive—and the possibilities are endless.



Your First Neighborhood Meeting

Getting off to a good start is essential. Remember, your goal is to motivate other neighbors to partner with you in your Neighborhood Watch group.

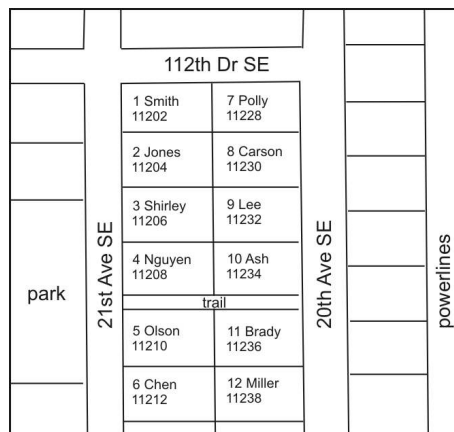
- **Spread the word.** Several weeks before your start-up meeting, spread the word by talking to your neighbors. You want to get as many neighbors as possible to attend your first meeting. Write up an invitation that is simple and clear, stating day, date, time and location. Mention a recent crime as incentive. If you plan to offer food and beverages, say so; some people will show up just for the snack. Don't put invitations into mailboxes—it's illegal.
- **Begin work on your contact list** at the same time.
- **Remind folks.** A few days before your start-up meeting, remind folks. If you need to, ask for their help. They can bring refreshments or folding chairs, or help you with the organizing. Getting them involved helps to secure their participation.
- **Prepare an agenda** for your meeting. Include time to share information and concerns. Establish a few neighborhood priorities. Discuss home security measures that can be taken immediately, and possible use of Neighborhood Watch signage.
- **Select a Neighborhood Watch captain,** delegate tasks based on your discussion, and decide on the time and place of your next meeting. The captain will be the contact for your group and will share crime alerts via phone or e-mail with the rest of the neighbors.
- At your start-up meeting, **have name tags ready** and encourage everyone to introduce themselves. Pass out an attendance sheet, and collect complete information for your contact list.



Getting Organized

The key to any successful Neighborhood Watch is getting organized. The following steps will help you go from thinking about a Neighborhood Watch program to having one.

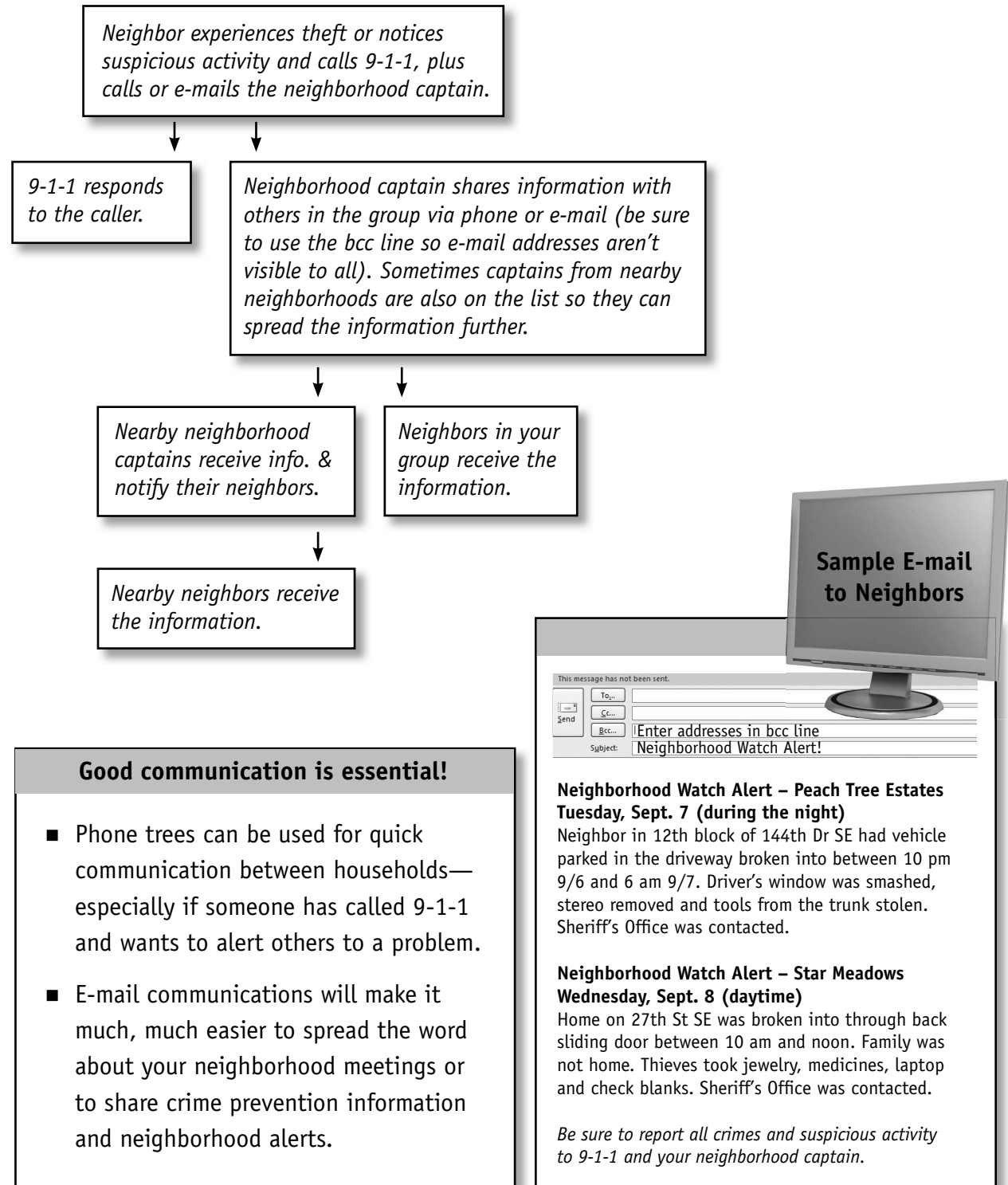
1. First, **determine your Neighborhood Watch "area."** This may be only those within your visual sight line, or it may be much larger. Each neighborhood decides for itself.
2. Second, **make a map of your neighborhood.** Sketch the basic layout of your neighborhood. Include streets, building lots, houses and house numbers. Then number the building lots in order. This will help you to match each house to the information on your contact list, the next step in your organizing.
3. **Create a neighborhood contact list** that contains the information you'll need to communicate easily and help each other. Who lives in each house? What is the best phone and e-mail to reach them? You may also choose to include more details such as what cars they drive, ages of children, etc. If you know what is usual and customary at each home, you'll be able to recognize and report what is unusual.



For existing maps of your neighborhood, visit the County Assessor's Web page at <http://assessor.snoco.org>. Under "Online Tools," choose SCOPI. This interactive map tool can provide a wealth of useful information.

Neighborhood Watch Roster			
Residents	Address	Phone	E-Mail
1 Tom Smith	11202 21st Ave SE	xxx-xxx-xxxx	xxxx@comcast.net
2 Sue & Bob Jones	11204 21st Ave SE	xxx-xxx-xxxx	xxxx@frontier.com
3 Bob & Jo Shirley	11206 21st Ave SE	not interested	n/a
4 Paul Nguyen	11208 21st Ave SE	xxx-xxx-xxxx	xxxx@yahoo.com

How Information is Shared



Neighborhood Watch Signs



Meet Boris the Burglar, the new face of Neighborhood Watch. Boris the Burglar signs and decals can be purchased through the National Sheriff's Association. Visit their Web site at www.sheriffs.org. This sign plus a very similar sign, called Masked Bad Guy, can be purchased from the National Neighborhood Watch Institute at www.nnwi.org.



These new orange and white signs take the place of the blue "eyeball" sign we've all seen before. Criminals know that these newer signs represent current, active Neighborhood Watch groups.

Rules for posting Neighborhood Watch signs

No posting is allowed on PUD poles. This is prohibited largely out of a safety concern for linemen working up and down on the poles.

Before you put up any signs near public right-of-way, be sure to read Bulletin #104 from Snohomish County Public Works. If you have questions, call Public Works Customer Service at 425-388-6453.

Neighborhood Watch Signs

Bulletin
#104



Q: Do I need the County's permission to post a Neighborhood Watch sign in my neighborhood?

A: In accordance with SCC Title 13, the placement of a private sign in the public right-of-way requires a permit from the Public Works Department. Through a "no-fee" permit process, sponsors of neighborhood watch signs are obligated to inform the Public Works Department of sign locations and dates of placement.

Q: How do I apply for a Neighborhood Watch sign permit?

A: Applications are available from the Public Works Customer Service Counter on the 2nd floor of the Robert J. Drewel Building or online at www.snoco.org, search "neighborhood watch signs." A fee is not required for a permit. The application is reviewed to be certain that the sign placement doesn't restrict safe movement of traffic and pedestrians. A site plan is required showing the proposed location of sign placement. The review time is approximately 1-2 weeks. If locations are approved, a Type C right-of-way permit will be issued.

Q: Where can I place the Neighborhood Watch sign?

A: Sign placement may be limited as determined in the review. Applicants place signs on new 4 X 4 posts set to specifics below. The location of a post-mounted sign shall not restrict the vision of motorists entering or leaving public or private rights-of-way and there shall be unobstructed vision for traffic at intersections, driveways, mailboxes, bus stops etc. Signs which obstruct the vision of motorists, or are a potential traffic hazard, will be removed by the Public Works Department.



Q: What specifics for placing signs should be considered?

A: The following should be considered when deciding where to place the sign:

1. Location—as determined by application and review.
2. Posts—a 12-foot, 4 x 4 cedar wood post is required to be buried 3 feet into the ground. The use of anchor rods or cleats is helpful in preventing vandalism of the sign post.
3. Distance from the road—place signs 6 to 12 feet from the edge of the roadway (traveled way) depending on local visibility conditions. Where there is a curb, the sign should be at a distance of at least 2 feet from the curb, measured to the outside of the road.

(continued on back)

4. Height—the bottom of the sign should be mounted on the 4 X 4 post at a minimum height of 7 feet from the nearest edge of the roadway.
5. Angle—Signs are normally mounted at an approximate right angle to the direction of and facing the traffic that they are intended to serve. A post-mounted sign should be turned slightly away from the roadway to avoid glare from headlights to approaching traffic.

Q: Is insurance required?

A: Questions of risk and liability arising out of the use of the public right of way for placement of a private sign are covered by the provisions of SCC 13.10.090 and SCC 13.10.100. Liability Insurance may be required if the engineer determines that there is a risk of potential liability to the County.

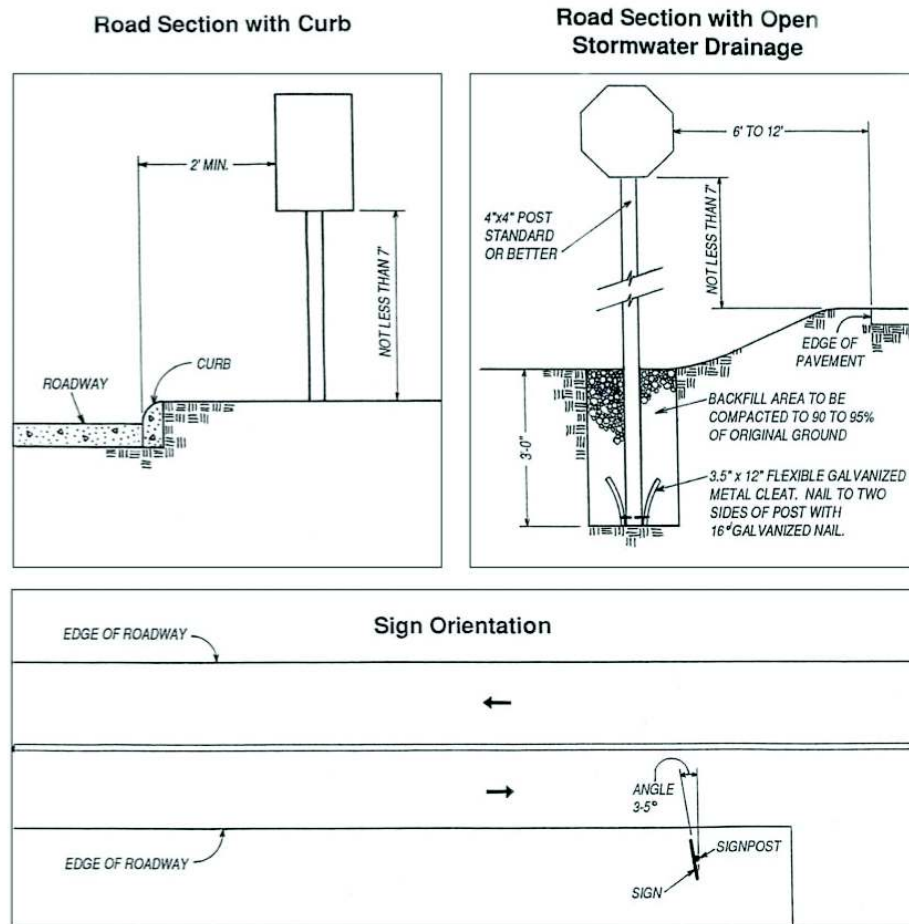
Q: Who maintains the signs?

A: Maintenance and replacement of a damaged or deteriorated sign will be the sole responsibility of the sign sponsor or the permittee whichever is applicable, in accordance with the terms of SCC 13.50.030.

Sign Installation Guidelines

(not to scale)

Sources: **Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices**, U.S. Dept. of Transportation FHWA, and **Design Standards and Specifications**, Snohomish County Public Works Department



This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to the Snohomish County Code.

Snohomish County Public Works, 425-388-3488 or 1-800-562-4367, ext. 3488.
This paper is recycled & recyclable. July 2011

Online Crime Mapping Tool

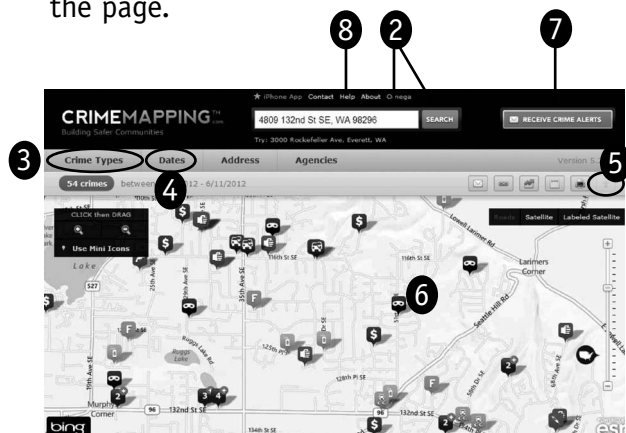
The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office maintains an online crime mapping tool. This tool allows you to specify an address and timeframe and choose the type of crime activity you want to see mapped on the image.

1. To access the Snohomish County Crime Mapping page, select the blue icon on the Sheriff's Office home page (<http://sheriff.snoco.org>). Next click "[Take me to CrimeMapping.com!](#)"
2. From the CrimeMapping.com home page, in the white box at the top, enter the address you wish to search. For example: 4809 132nd St. SE, Everett, WA. Then click the green "[Search](#)" button on the right.

The map will automatically select a one-mile radius around the address you entered. You can adjust the size of the radius or choose to eliminate it by clicking on "[Remove Radius.](#)"

3. Use the "[Crime Types](#)" menu to select the crimes you're interested in. The "[Check All](#)" button is a good shortcut if you want all crimes mapped. To help you understand what the various crime icons mean, hover over each symbol for a description.
4. Specify the time period you want to search using the "[Dates](#)" tab. Select start and end dates for your search, then click the "[Apply](#)" button on the right. Crime information is available for the past 180 days.

5. To collapse the menu bar for a better view of the map, click the blue arrow on the right side of the menu bar.
6. Left-click on a crime icon for more details. A box will open that includes date of the crime, which block it occurred in, and a brief description. From this box you can also link to the Sheriff's Office Web site for crime prevention tips or to locate registered sex offenders.
7. If you wish to receive free email alerts when crime occurs in your area, click on the orange "[Receive Crime Alerts](#)" in the upper right corner.
8. To learn about more of the great features of this tool—such as sharing the map you've created with others, displaying a detailed list of the crimes on your map, or making colorful charts—click "[Help](#)" at the top of the page.



Be a Good Witness

Pay attention to what is happening in your neighborhood!

- **Keep your curtains open.** Windows are the eyes into your neighborhood. Closed curtains tell the bad guys that nobody is paying attention.
- **Take walks through your neighborhood.** It's good for your health and will help deter crime. As you walk, say hello to those you pass. Bad guys don't want to be noticed. But never be confrontational. That's a job for deputies.
- **Keep a journal.** This is key. It doesn't have to be fancy, just a notepad where you can record dates, times and note events as they occur. Some neighborhoods are now using technology to set up blogs or networking sites to facilitate information sharing.
- **Take pictures or video** of suspicious activity, if you can.



A Journaling Success Story

An experienced Neighborhood Watch captain tells this story:

One night about 11 p.m., a neighbor spotted a couple of kids climbing into his car parked outside. They ripped out his stereo and ran away.

A second neighbor just around the corner saw two kids running fast through her neighborhood around 11 p.m. that night. She noted the event in her journal, including the time and description of the kids.

A bit further down the street, a neighbor was working at her computer late that evening. She looked out the window and saw two kids duck behind her shrubs.

She recognized one of the kids who lived just across the street. When she opened her window and asked what he was doing, he jumped up and ran home. She made a note in her journal.

At their next Neighborhood Watch meeting, the three neighbors compared notes and realized they had all witnessed small bits of the same crime. They reported what they had seen to the Sheriff's Office.

Because of the combined power of those three journals, a deputy went to the kid's house and knocked on the door. Long story short . . . they found a lot of stolen property in the kid's room. The kid and his friend were caught.

Neighborhood Watch Journal

Tues, Sept. 7 (11:15 pm)
Bobby Smith and another boy
were hiding in bush under den
window. Ran when I asked what
they were doing.

How to Spot Suspicious Activity



1 Watch for people:

- With any sort of weapon
- Behaving strangely
- Removing valuables from homes or vehicles
- Fleeing while carrying something
- Going door to door, especially if they go to the rear of the house
- Creating foot traffic to a particular place, with short visits
- Loitering around schools, parks or on your street
- Offering items for sale at very low prices
- Being forced into a vehicle



2 Listen for:

- Cries for help
- Continuous screaming
- Activated alarms
- The sound of breaking glass or shattered wood
- Pounding coming from a nearby residence or apartment
- Gun fire
- Unusual sounds



3 Watch for vehicles:

- Leaving a location at night with their lights off
- Unattended, with the motor running
- Abandoned or in bad condition, with signs of being in an accident
- Strange to your neighborhood or acting suspiciously

When and How to Call 9-1-1

Don't be afraid to "bother" the deputies! Calling won't guarantee that the deputies can fix the problem, but NOT CALLING GUARANTEES THEY WON'T.

Call 9-1-1 if . . .

- You know a crime is happening at the time, or
- You suspect something dangerous or suspicious is going on.

During the call . . .

- Stay calm.
- Try to be specific with your information.
- Give the exact location, and good descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle.

Questions you'll be asked . . .

- What does the suspect look like?
- What was he/she driving?
- Did you get the license plate number?

If you have information about a crime or suspicious activity that is not in progress, and you wish to remain anonymous, call the
Sheriff's Office Tip Line
425-388-3845



Look for Details!

Always try to note the important physical features of the suspect, such as sex, height, weight, race, physical impairments, and approximate age.

Always get the vehicle license plate number, if you can! Make note of vehicle details, such as:

- Kind of vehicle: SUV, sedan, van, truck
- Color: light, dark, metallic
- Make: Ford, Honda, Mercedes, etc.
- Model: Camry, Mustang, Explorer, etc.

Protecting Yourself

There's a lot you can do to protect yourself:

- Leave your front and back porch lights on every night.
- Lock your door every time you leave.
- Install sturdy, solid core doors and deadbolt locks.
- Check to be sure all windows are locked when you leave.
- Use a dowel or charley bar on your sliding glass door.
- Trim your bushes and trees so burglars can't hide behind them.
- Consider installing an alarm system.
- Put Neighborhood Watch warning decals on your windows.
- Protect your valuables by recording serial numbers, taking photos, and using Operation ID.



Home Inventory:

If your home was burglarized, could you provide property crime detectives with a detailed list of all your stolen property, including serial numbers and other identifying marks? Detectives need this information to solve the crime, and insurance companies need it to expedite your claim.

Photo document your personal property with pictures and/or videotape.

Start with overview photographs of a room, then take close-ups of specific property. Take pictures showing brand names and type, as well as serial numbers. Items such as jewelry, art, and collectibles should be photographed with a tape measure to provide scale. Remember to document every room, including the garage, as well as vehicles and closets.

Document your personal belongings on paper or with a computer. Include the quantity of items, item name/description, make and/or model, serial number, purchase cost, and purchase year. After documenting property, store photographs and inventory sheet, along with receipts of major purchases, in a secure location off-site, such as a safe deposit box. Review and update your inventory annually.

Operation ID is a nationally-recognized burglary prevention program that helps property crime detectives identify and return stolen property to its rightful owner. Operation ID involves marking or engraving property with a unique identifying number. Do not use your Social Security number!

Preventing/Resolving Problems

Whether you own or rent your home, it's important to you. Your home is:

- Where you spend time with friends and loved ones.
- Your sanctuary after a hard day at work.
- Where you keep all your "stuff."
- Probably your single largest living expense.

Sometimes our peace and sense of security is disturbed by those who live nearby. The following tips are meant to assist you during those times.

Be A Good Neighbor

We all can identify the bad neighbors around us. They're the ones who play loud music, drive too fast, don't maintain a clean yard, and let their dogs bark all night. Others are just plain rude. But before you try to "fix" your neighbors, take a close look at your own behavior and property. Have you done everything possible to be a good neighbor? Is your property clean and well-maintained? Do you always drive safely when you come and go from the neighborhood? Are you cleaning up after your pets, and keeping them quiet?

Being a good neighbor is always the first step in resolving neighborhood conflict with minimal effort. Introduce yourself to new neighbors and learn their names. Lend a hand when needed. Take the time to wave and say hello. Start a Neighborhood Watch group and organize a gathering to discuss neighborhood concerns. Establishing friendly relationships before a problem develops will pave the way for an easier solution.



Please keep in mind that you can't really "fix" other people, but you can fix problems. Separate the people from the issues.

Remember, if you spot suspicious or criminal activity, always call 9-1-1 and report what you are observing. For less severe problems, try some of the following solutions.

Solutions for Neighborhood Problems

1. Talk to your neighbor

This is where well-established, friendly relationships pay off. Most reasonable people will try to fix a problem, if they're able. Don't let issues fester. Deal with small problems promptly, before you're "sick and tired" of putting up with a situation.

- Don't start the conversation when you're angry. Wait until you're calm, and then approach your neighbor. When possible, choose a neutral location such as the sidewalk or in their yard.
- First, ask your neighbor when would be a good time to have a conversation. This will give them a chance to gather their thoughts, if necessary.
- In a respectful way, explain what's bothering you. Try to de-personalize the situation so it doesn't become a personal battle. Stay focused on the problem and not the person.
- Be mindful of your language choices. Statements such as, "If you don't, I'll . . ." or, "You always . . ." will only put them on the defensive.
- Don't assume your neighbor knows what your concerns are, or that they will even agree there's a problem.
- If your complaint is about a neighbor's child, it's possible they were not aware of what the child was doing. They may appreciate being notified, so they can handle it.
- Be sure you have proof to back up your complaint. Your neighbor may be upset if they feel an accusation has been made about them, or their child, with no evidence of any kind.

2. Research the issue

If talking doesn't resolve the problem, do some research into the issue. Not everything that is irritating is illegal, but sometimes an annoyance is against the law. Knowledge of the law, as it pertains to your dispute, can help you deal with an uncooperative neighbor.

A good place to start your research is the Snohomish County Code, which is available online at www.snoco.org, search "county code."

3. Contact them in writing

If the problem persists, compose a short letter to your neighbor and mail it, or place it on their doorstep.

Remember to be positive and don't convey an angry, threatening tone. The letter should respectfully state the situation and may include possible suggestions to correct the problem. Consider whether there are ways you can help them solve the problem; offer assistance if it seems appropriate.

4. Seek help from others in your neighborhood

Resolving disputes one-on-one is always best, but may not always work.

- If you own a residence in a neighborhood with a Homeowners' Association, contact them about the issue to determine if they can help.
- If you rent, contact the resident manager, the management agency, or your landlord to ask for assistance.

5. Don't become a vigilante!

Vigilantism is never a good plan. It's easy to become frustrated and angry when conflicts are difficult to resolve. But becoming overly confrontational can create more problems than it solves.

You may have a completely legitimate complaint against a neighbor. You may even have solid proof of criminal activity. However, if you let your anger take control, and you start to behave in an aggressive or harassing manner, it can undermine the basis of any future legal action against the neighbor. A history of antagonistic behavior between you and your neighbor will cloud the issue and make it less likely that a jury will convict.

Worst case scenario, confrontational actions can get you hurt or even killed if the situation spirals out of control. Be patient, keep your cool, and let the authorities handle the toughest problems.

6. Try outside mediation

Sometimes an impartial third party can help you work out differences. They can provide a forum for you to politely state your concerns and to listen carefully to your neighbor's perspective.

The Dispute Resolution Center of Snohomish and Island Counties provides conflict resolution and facilitation services at very low cost. Mediators can help you communicate with your neighbor to find a mutually acceptable agreement. The DRC can also provide facilitators to manage neighborhood group interactions and develop creative solutions.

Dispute Resolution Center

425-339-1335; 800-280-4770

E-mail: drc@voaww.org; Web site: www.voaww.org/drc



7. Notify the authorities

Call Snohomish County Animal Services at 425-388-3440 for all **animal-related** complaints, including barking or vicious dogs and animal cruelty. You can also file an online complaint. Go to www.snoco.org. Under “Top 10 Popular Pages” you’ll find Animal Complaints.

Snohomish County Code Enforcement responds to complaints regarding **land use and development regulations**, including junkyard conditions. They encourage voluntary compliance and educate about the benefits of code compliance. If necessary, they can apply progressive enforcement measures as necessary to ensure that code violations are resolved or mitigated. Complaint Investigation Request forms are available online at www.snoco.org. Under “Departments” select “Planning and Development Services” then “Code Enforcement—How to file a complaint.” You also can request a form be mailed to you by calling 425-388-3650. Complainants can remain anonymous but must provide a contact name and phone number.

Contact the Snohomish Health District for **environmental health** complaints, such as improper storage of garbage, illegal dumping or conditions that are attracting rodents. Complaints can be filed by calling 425-339-5250 or visit their Web site at www.snohd.org for more information.

The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office will respond to **traffic** complaints in your neighborhood. In-progress traffic issues should be immediately reported to 9-1-1. Ongoing traffic problems may be reported to the Traffic Enforcement Unit via the Sheriff's Web site at <http://sheriff.snoco.org>. Under "Contact Information" select "Submit a Traffic Complaint."

Other Useful Resources

- Snohomish County Public Works—road maintenance (425-388-7500) and surface water (425-388-3464) issues.
- Washington State Department of Ecology—groundwater and soil contamination (425-649-7000).
- Puget Sound Clean Air—air quality concerns, such as pollution or odors. Call 800-552-3565 or e-mail your complaint to inspection@pscleanair.org.
- Department of Social and Health Services should be notified if you suspect abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable adult. Call 1-866-363-4276 or visit their Web site at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/endharm.shtml>.

Legal Action – A Last Resort

You may have an attorney write a letter for you. This can be quite effective and won't cost much if you present the details to the attorney in an organized way.

If there is a financial aspect to the dispute, you may bring a small claims suit for recovery of money if the amount claimed does not exceed \$5,000. For information on how to file a suit in Small Claims Court, visit their Web site at www.snoco.org, search "district court."

To learn more about court process, contact the Court Facilitator at www.snoco.org, search "family law facilitator."

For information on free civil (non-criminal) legal resources, contact the Northwest Justice Project at www.nwjustice.org.

Low-income individuals and seniors can receive free telephone assistance by calling 1-888-201-1014, the Coordinated Legal Education Advice and Referral service (C.L.E.A.R.).



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Sheriff's Office Resources and Contact Information

Remember, you're not alone in this effort.

For questions about Neighborhood Watch, e-mail the Sheriff's Office at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org, or leave a voicemail at 425-388-7375.

Visit the Sheriff's Office Web page at <http://sheriff.snoco.org> for more crime prevention ideas. You'll find an archive of our Partners in Crime Prevention Newsletter, indexed by subject. Under the "Sheriff Services" tab, select "Crime Prevention."

On that same Web page you'll find our online Crime Mapping tool. See page 10 inside for tips on how to use the crime map.

It's also possible to hire an off-duty deputy to provide neighborhood emphasis patrol. Cost is \$40-\$45 per hour, depending on specific services provided. For more information contact Deputy Adam Fortney at 425-220-2976 or visit www.snocodsa.com and click "Off-Duty Employment."

For emergencies, call 9-1-1.

Revised August 2013