



Neighborhood Crime Watch Unit

Boston Police Department • Kathleen M. O'Toole, Commissioner
Judith Wright, Director • 1 Schroeder Plaza, Boston MA 02120 • 617-343-4345

Mission: to deter crime & reduce fear

Our mission is to develop and maintain crime watch groups in every neighborhood in Boston; to provide these groups with the necessary skills and tools to act as organized, empowered groups that work with the police to deter crime and reduce fear; to aid groups in networking with nearby or affiliated groups; and to provide guidance and support in developing community impact on the courts.

Building community block by block



The Neighborhood Crime Watch Unit has existed since 1985. Our staff is located at Boston Police Headquarters.

Currently we have assisted in the formation of over 1,267 crime watch groups in the city of Boston.

These 1,267 crime watches are small groups consisting of the people living on one block, one street, or even in just one building. We feel it is very important to “**Think small**,” because the most important aspect of any crime watch group is the link from neighbor to neighbor.

The first thing an individual who wants to start a crime watch will do, is to invite one of our coordinators to a meeting of neighbors. Usually this meeting is held in a home on the street in question. We provide meeting notices to the host to distribute on their street. Often this request for a neighborhood meeting is a result of a crime that has recently taken place, although fear and a deteriorating sense of community also contribute to the desire to form a crime watch.

**NCWU:
Since
1985**



“Neighbors who know each other, and who are trained to react, make their street very inhospitable to crime.”

Crime Watch basics

At the first few meetings we help the group to:

1. Identify the specific crime issues on their street
2. Establish a telephone network among neighbors
3. Learn to rely on one another when travelling to and from their homes and to respond effectively to a signal for help (whistle alert)
4. Establish procedures for contacting police regarding incidents and how to follow up on these incidents
5. Take control of street lighting, trash, shrub-trimming and other maintenance issues affecting the street as a whole
6. Adopt basic home security measures including adequate outdoor lighting and clearly visible address numbers on buildings
7. Learn the skills and attitudes to operate as an organized and empowered crime watch



What happens next

After these first few meetings, the group has the tools to be an effective crime watch. Residents usually tailor these skills to meet the specific needs of their street. By monitoring crime incidents, it will become apparent to the group when or where to be especially vigilant.

A group may decide that the presence of residents out on their street is required on certain days and times to halt a rash of car break-ins. Even chronic or persistent problems can be tackled when neighbors work with local police to devise long term solutions. Perseverance and cooperation can really pay off.

Once an immediate problem has been solved the group may be relatively inactive for a while except for the occasional social gathering. The important thing is that the crime watch outlook has taken hold and a dormant group can spring to action as future problems arise. Some groups enjoying a crime-free period use their energy to fix up an abandoned lot, organize youth or elderly activities or some other community enhancing project. Maintenance of a crime watch group can consist of block parties, yard sales, meet your neighbors get-togethers, holiday events and street clean-ups. Every August, crime watch groups reaffirm their strength and commitment by celebrating National Night Out along with 9,500 other cities & towns in the country.

“Think Small”

Crime Watch leads to a safer community

A crime watch will not completely eliminate crime, but an effective group will deter crime and reduce fear. After all, a strong community is one that is very difficult for a criminal to pass through unnoticed. We have many examples of assaults, thefts or other crimes that were halted because of alert neighbors. Neighbors who know each other and who are trained to react make their street very inhospitable to crime.



Neighborhood Crime Watch Unit, Boston Police Department 617-343-4345

Judith Wright, Director
Wallace Tilford, Frank Hughes, Coordinators

Important Police Telephone Numbers

Emergency: Police, Ambulance, Fire 9-1-1

All numbers Area Code 617

Area A

Charlestown, East Boston, North End,
Beacon Hill, Downtown, Boston Common,
Chinatown, Waterfront

District 1

40 New Sudbury St., Downtown 343-4240
Community Service Office 343-4627

District 7

69 Paris St., East Boston 343-4220
Community Service Office 343-4220

Area D

Back Bay, South End, Fenway, Allston,
Brighton

District 4

650 Harrison Ave., South End 343-4250
Community Service Office 343-4457

District 14

301 Washington St., Brighton 343-4260
Community Service Office 343-4376

Area B

Roxbury, Mission Hill, Dorchester,
Mattapan

District 2

135 Dudley St., Roxbury 343-4270
Community Service Office 343-4278

District 3

1165 Blue Hill Ave., Mattapan ... 343-4700
Community Service Office 343-4700

Area E

West Roxbury, Roslindale, Jamaica Plain,
Hyde Park, Readville

District 5

1708 Centre St. W. Rox. 343-4560
Community Service Office 343-4564

District 13

3345 Washington St., JP 343-5630

District 18

1249 Hyde Park Ave., Hyde Pk. . 343-5600
Community Service Office 343-5611

Area C

South Boston, Dorchester

District 11

40 Gibson St., Dorchester 343-4330

Community Service Office 343-4524

District 6

101 Broadway, South Boston 343-4730

Community Service Office 343-4747

Community Disorders Unit 343-4527
Domestic Violence Unit 343-4350

Other Important Numbers (Area Code 617)

City Hall, Constituent Services Division (24 hrs.) 635-4500
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services 635-3485
Public Works, Street Lighting Division 635-7500
Inspectional Services 635-5300
Arson Hot Line 442-7766
State Police 523-1212
MBTA Police 222-1212

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