

## Neighborhood Watch®

- Attend Neighborhood Watch® meetings often. Your Community Policing Deputy will inform you about local crime trends and explain what you can do to circumvent them.
- Above all, stay involved. It is the most effective way to reduce or prevent crime and make your neighborhood safe. Remember, your job is to report crime.

**The responsibility for apprehending criminals belongs to Law Enforcement Officials.**

The key to keeping a Neighborhood Watch® group active is maintaining interest over time. So often a community will form a Neighborhood Watch® in response to a perceived crime problem. Unfortunately, once the problem subsides so does the program participation. Getting everyone involved and keeping an active interest will create a feeling of pride and a positive atmosphere in the community. A Neighborhood Watch® can easily be adapted to meet your needs wherever you live or work.

Active Neighborhood Watch® groups can make changes, through their local officials, such as improving street lighting, increasing patrols in the area, and changing traffic flow

patterns. Active apartment or multi-family dwelling groups can make changes by working closely with their landlords or building managers. They can work together to improve lighting and security of individual units as well as communal areas, and they can develop new policies or practices to improve building and property security.

Make belonging to your Neighborhood Watch® group an enjoyable experience. People will get involved and remain interested if the programs are enjoyable as well as meaningful. Use imagination. Schedule potluck dinners, organize clean-up campaigns, or hold block parties. The possibilities are endless when neighbors unite and work together.

The Community Policing Unit of the Sheriff's Office can provide these additional benefits to Neighborhood Watch®:

- Focused / Specialized enforcement activities
- Additional Traffic enforcement within the community
- Home security surveys (free of charge)
- Crime prevention presentations on various topics, e.g. Identity Theft, Personal Safety, Senior Safety, or other topics of community interest.



**Sheriff Jeffrey R. Gahler**

### HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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# NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH® PROGRAM



## Help Deter Crime in Your Community



### HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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## WHAT IS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH® PROGRAM?

Neighborhood Watch® is a crime prevention program enlisting the active participation of residents, in cooperation with the Harford County Sheriff's Office. The main objective is to reduce the incidents of fear and crime in their communities. It involves neighbors getting to know one another and developing a program of mutual assistance. It involves neighbors becoming educated in crime reporting and suspect identification techniques. Finally, it involves neighbors using crime prevention strategies as tools to reduce crime in their communities



## WHY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM?

The community has the primary responsibility for combating crime. The most effective approach is to stop crime before it occurs. The ability to stop crime is greatly enhanced when neighbors cooperate with one another to assist the Sheriff's Office. Neighborhood Watch members will receive Operation I.D. stickers to place in their windows and the Sheriff's Office will place Neighborhood Watch signs on streets, warning criminals they are in an active Neighborhood Watch community. This lets the criminal element know that "neighbors are watching out for one another."

Neighborhood Watch programs are the most effective means available for keeping crime out of neighborhoods because they rely on the best crime fighting tool ever invented: good neighbors. Fortunately, good neighbors are found everywhere. They live in houses and apartment buildings; they live in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Good neighbors are everywhere. The Harford County Sheriff's Office Neighborhood Watch Program unites the Sheriff's Office with local organizations and individual residents in a community-wide effort to reduce residential crime. Neighbors working together with the Sheriff's Office are a formidable crime fighting team. Be a good neighbor and make your community safer by starting a Neighborhood Watch® Program.

## HOW DO I START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH® PROGRAM?

The Harford County Sheriff's Office Community Policing Unit will assist in starting a program in your neighborhood. A Community Policing representative will be available for your first meeting to assist with the initial organization of the Neighborhood Watch® Program and to discuss crime concerns specific to your neighborhood or community. **Contact your Community Policing Office to get started. Office numbers are listed on the front of this brochure.**

Talk to your neighbors. Are they interested? Do they understand the value of a Neighborhood Watch® Program? Are they aware of, or concerned about specific crime problems in your area? If they are, be sure to mention the following:

- Neighborhood Watch® is a partnership between neighbors to assist the Sheriff's Office in the reduction and fear of crime;
- Neighborhood Watch® does not require frequent meetings;
- Neighborhood Watch® does not require anyone to take

personal risks to prevent crime, and the Sheriff's Office discourages community members from doing so:

- A representative from the Sheriff's Office will attend your meetings to answer questions about crime and provide information about Police procedures

## MAINTAINING A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH® PROGRAM

After your Neighborhood Watch® is established, be sure everyone understands and observes the following guidelines:

- Be alert and report unusual or suspicious behavior in your neighborhood. Call the Sheriff's Office if necessary. Write down descriptions of suspicious person(s); vehicles; and, if possible, license numbers.
- Tell a trusted neighbor if your house will be unoccupied for an extended period. Let your neighbor know how to reach you in an emergency.
- Look after your neighbors' homes when they are away and ask them to look after yours. Ask someone to pick up mail and newspapers. Ask someone to store trashcans and/or recycling bins. Don't send a message that says, "None one is home."

## Neighborhood Watch®

- **Get to know your neighbors.**
- **Involved in the betterment of your community.**
- **Have direct contact with a Deputy from The Sheriff's Office.**
- **Have Neighborhood Watch signs posted.**