



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

*Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe*

Ottawa Neighbourhood Watch

An Introductory Overview

www.ottawapolice.ca

Neighbourhood Watch

What it *IS*, and is *NOT*

Membership in a Watch IS About

- How to make your home less inviting as a target for thieves.
- How to participate in Operation Identification, making your property more difficult for burglars to dispose of.
- How to be alert to suspicious activities in your neighbourhood.
- How to respond appropriately to potential threats.

“For Neighbourhood Watch to be totally effective, each resident should take an active role in both security improvement and observation.”

Neighbourhood Watch

What it *IS*, and is *NOT*

Membership in a Watch is NOT About

- Being a busybody
- Being a vigilante
- Time-consuming duties and obligations
- Fees for service



How to Get a Watch Going

Step 1 – Determine the Level of Interest

- Why is a watch needed in your community?
- Are there chronic crime problems to be addressed?
- Talk to your neighbours. Do they share your concerns?
- Emphasize the need for increased citizen involvement.

How to Get a Watch Going

Step 1 – Determine the Level of Interest

- Emphasize partnership with the police in crime prevention.
- Build a team of neighbours willing to canvass the area and promote Neighbourhood Watch to assess the level of interest.
- If you live in an apartment block, enlist the help of the building owner/manager.

How to Get a Watch Going

Step 1 (Continued)

- What if some households just aren't interested?
 - Watches rarely achieve 100% participation.
 - An 80% Watch is better than no Watch!
- For a rate of participation lower than 50%, the CPC may assess the crime prevention effectiveness as questionable.

How to Get a Watch Going

Step 2 – Structure and Boundaries

- There is no universal organizational structure for a Watch. The best structure is the one that works for you.



How to Get a Watch Going

Step 2 – Guidelines

- A Watch should have natural community boundaries.
- Nobody should be responsible for much more than 10 households.
- A Watch should include approximately 100 homes.

These are guidelines – some very large Watches have operated successfully.

How to Get a Watch Going

Step 4 – (Continued)

- You will be supported by the resources of your CPC where you will be able to consult with Neighbourhood Officers who are familiar with local incidents and circumstances, and where you will have access to literature and pamphlets on a wide variety of topics related to Core Crime Prevention Programs and Public Safety.

Watch Roles and Responsibilities

Each new Watch elects from among its members, a Coordinator and enough Block Captains to help the Watch:

- Run smoothly, and
- To facilitate communication to and from Watch members.



Watch Roles and Responsibilities

Coordinator/Block Captains

- The Coordinator is responsible for the operation of the entire Watch and serves as the Watch's contact with the CPC and the local Coordinators' Association. The Coordinator is assisted by the Block Captains.
- The Block Captains are responsible for monitoring a set of approximately 10 homes. A Block Captain may also be called upon to substitute for the Coordinator from time to time.

Watch Roles and Responsibilities

Watch Members

- Your only duty is to look out for your own best interest, and those of your family and neighbours. You can do this by:
 - Remaining alert to any suspicious activity and reporting it promptly to the Police, then to a member of the Watch Executive.
 - Keeping your own home secure.
 - Monitoring your neighbours' homes during their absences.
 - Attending Watch meetings.
 - Just being a good neighbour, the kind you would like to have living next door.

Things Every Watch Member Should Know

When to Call the Police

- If something looks suspicious – Call the Police!!
- Even when a crime has already been committed, some people are still reluctant to inform the Police. If you don't want to call, then at least inform your Block Captain or Coordinator. If people know about crimes being committed, they become more watchful and are less likely to be victimized.

Things Every Watch Member Should Know

When to Call the Police (Cont'd)

- Typical criminal activities which may occur in your neighbourhood are:
 - **Break and entry into homes and motor vehicles**
 - **Vandalism**
 - **Public Disturbances**
 - **Physical or Sexual Assaults**
 - **Illicit drug transactions**
 - **Thefts of all kinds, including outdoor equipment and bicycles**

Things Every Watch Member Should Know

How to Call the Police – Do's

- Identify yourself as a Watch member.
- Be prepared to describe the person(s), vehicle or circumstances as fully as possible.
- Keep the suspects and incident under surveillance from a safe distance until police arrive.
- Make a second call if the activity gets worse.
- Inform your Coordinator or Block Captain when time permits.

Things Every Watch Member Should Know

How to Call the Police – Don'ts

- Attempt apprehension or pursuit.
- Attempt to confirm your suspicions by approaching a home or vehicle where a crime may have taken place, or may still be in progress.



Things Every Watch Member Should Know

MAKE THE RIGHT CALL : (See Appendix D of Manual)

911	Life threatening emergency or crime in progress
613-230-6211 TTY:613-232-1123	Other non life threatening Police emergencies
613-236-1222 Orléans / ext 3571 Cumberland	Community Police Centres and other emergencies