

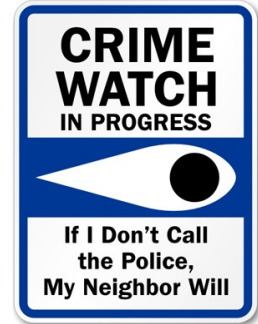
## Neighborhood Watch – the Essentials

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At the August 10, 2009 crime prevention meeting (covered in the August 2009 *Highlander* and also posted on this website), Neighborhood Watch was one of the programs described by the presenters from the Clallam County Sheriff's Office. This article describes the essentials of that program for the Highland Hills community.

An effective neighborhood watch program includes (1) awareness, (2) information, and (3) neighbors watching neighbors and reporting suspicious activity.

Awareness began with the August meeting and the subsequent article in the *Highlander*. It has since continued with the posting of Crime Watch signs at the two entrances to Highland Hills.



Information on Neighborhood Watch programs was provided at the August meeting and continues with this article. The essence of Neighborhood Watch was summed up well by Sequim Police officer Maris Turner in a 2008 *Sequim Gazette* article on Sequim's Block Watch program:

*"A block watch is simply a group of neighbors who have organized, come to know one another and decided to work together to improve the place where they live. The biggest part of it is that they are looking out for each other."*

Neighborhood Watch thus comes down to this: getting to know and trust your neighbors and extending that to maintaining an awareness of activity in your local neighborhood. This can often start by specifically asking a neighbor to watch your house when you're going out of town. My belief is that we already have a good measure of this activity.

You can learn the details of recognizing suspicious activity, suspicious persons, and suspicious vehicles in the Neighborhood Watch manual (provided by Clallam County). This 13 page manual is posted under the Safety & Awareness link on the Highland Hills website home page at [http://www.hhmcsequim.org/Neighborhood\\_Watch\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.hhmcsequim.org/Neighborhood_Watch_Manual.pdf)

The last but crucial piece of Neighborhood Watch is reporting. Suspicious activity can be reported either directly to the Clallam County Sheriff at 417-2259, or anonymously via the Crime Net website [www.clallam.net/features/onlineservices.html](http://www.clallam.net/features/onlineservices.html)

Finally, understand that 'Neighborhood Watch' is but one of many methods of 'Crime Prevention'. There is a lot more to say about Crime Prevention and that information is on the Highland Hills website under the Safety & Awareness link at <http://www.hhmcsequim.org/Crime.html>.