

**Kansas City Missouri  
Police Department**



**Neighborhood Block Watch**

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# **Neighborhood Watch Program Importance and Benefits**

## **Introduction**

This booklet has been prepared to assist you in planning and organizing your Neighborhood Watch. It is meant to be a helpful guide to what has worked in the past. When creating or improving safety in your neighborhood, be creative and seek resources that are readily available to you or would work for you in your unique situation. If you find a system that works, remember to share the ideas as we are all in this together and I'm sure you recall the difficulties you faced when your group was first starting.

## **Program Benefits**

Some neighborhoods may be more susceptible to crime than others; however, all should consider establishing a Neighborhood Watch Program. To assist you in creating one that will have a lasting, positive impact on your surroundings, we will list some of the "selling points" of a Neighborhood Watch.

### **Prevention of Residential Crime**

Neighborhood Watch Programs have aided the Police Department in reducing residential burglaries, theft of property, vandalism, fraud, sexual assault, and even traffic related offences. The establishment of a Neighborhood Watch Program in a low crime area gives added assurance that it will remain safe. Crime is rarely stationary and often moves from one neighborhood to another.

### **Greater Awareness of Crime**

Home security and personal safety are strengthened as residents become more aware of the threat of crime; exposure to crime prevention techniques increases a citizen's ability to remove and reduce opportunities for criminal acts to occur.

### **Enhanced Reporting of Suspicious Activities**

Establishing a friendly and supportive relationship with each other, residents are more aware of who belongs in the neighborhood and are more inclined to report suspicious persons or activities to law enforcement agencies. Typically, the number of calls regarding suspicious persons or activities increase substantially after a Neighborhood Block Watch is established.

### **Serves as a Warning to Criminals**

Neighborhood Watch signs warn strangers that residents are concerned about crime and will call the police for assistance when suspicious activity is observed. However, signs alone are of little deterrent value if the community does not actively support and participate in the Neighborhood Watch Program. The best value of signs is to remind the neighborhood to watch out for itself.

### **Promotes Neighborliness**

Neighborhood Watches encourage residents to interact with each other by exchanging information about planned activities, meetings about safety and security, and break the ice for establishing valuable friendships. The interaction and friendship will enhance the sense of community spirit and improve the quality of life for all involved.

#### Access to Crime Data

Crime often moves from one neighborhood to another. Obviously, it is important for neighborhoods to be informed about crime trends that may threaten them. Community Interaction Officers can help identify trends and patterns through division crime analysis, and routinely notify Neighborhood Watch leaders of crime related problems and trends.

#### Creates a Listened-to Unified Voice

When the various city departments are making decisions that involve neighborhoods, they usually will place more weight on the organized neighborhoods that come forward, and speak as a group. Having a block watch group already organized and functioning will allow your neighborhood to be better prepared to address issues as they invariably arise. An active group will also likely have made contacts with a large number of department personnel establishing a liaison for sharing information. Your group may also have an insider within a city department living in the neighborhood, adding to the likelihood of being heard.

#### Why Start One?

Unlike many law enforcement services, Neighborhood Watches should be initiated by citizens. Circumstances which normally serve as the catalyst for the project include:

- A neighborhood is victimized by burglary, vandalism or other crimes.
- Citizens perceive that there is a neighborhood crime problem even though only a few isolated incidents have occurred.
- Because of positive publicity about Neighborhood Watches and their successes, residents determine that they should participate in the program.
- After crime analysis, the Police Department determines that a residential neighborhood is experiencing an increase in crime.

#### Formation of a Planning Committee

Before embarking on a large scale Neighborhood Watch Program, a small group of concerned citizens and a Police Department Community Interaction Officer should meet and plan for the organization of one. The planning committee may consist of selected members of the civic or home owners association or perhaps a committee of the association formed for that purpose. If no such home owners group exists, members of the committee should represent several different blocks within the neighborhood since ultimately they may

serve as block captains. In most cases the resident who contacted the Police Department will assume the responsibility for choosing and coordinating the committee to activate the group.

### Functions of the Planning Committee

Identify crime-related problems that are a concern for the neighborhood.

One of the primary functions of the committee is to determine the extent and nature of the crime in the neighborhood. This can be done on the basis of crime analysis information the Community Interaction Officer can obtain.

### Obtain a Map of the Neighborhood

The map should depict all of the streets or roads to be covered by the Watch Program. In most instances the committee will determine the boundaries if they are not already well defined. If a map is not available, the committee can contact the Community Interaction Officer for assistance.

### Identify a Potential Watch Coordinator and Block Watch Captains

Typically, the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator will come from within the planning committee. Since a Captain is generally needed for each block or road, the committee may need to recruit residents who are not members of the committee. In doing so, the committee should use the maps to determine where a block watch or captains are required per road or highway in the affected area. In most instances, volunteers can be found through referrals by other residents. After identifying the potential volunteers, contact them and explain the duties of the block captains. Try to obtain a commitment so they can be introduced at the Neighborhood Watch meeting. When looking for potential leaders choose people who:

- Can communicate thoughts and ideas well
- Possess an ability to defuse difficult situations
- Are willing to be involved for the right reasons and not seeking personal power
- Good listeners
- Have ability to make long range plans
- Are persistent and reliable

### Establish a Meeting Date and Time

The date and time must be coordinated with the crime prevention officer to avoid conflicting commitments on that day and also doesn't conflict with other community meetings that may involve a large number of families.

### Choose a Convenient Meeting Facility

The meeting site should be as close to the neighborhood as possible. Most churches will gladly accommodate such groups. Other possibilities include: schools, community centers, police stations, fire stations, shopping center's meeting offices, etc.

### Publicize the Meeting

Send out a notice of the neighborhood meeting including date, time and location. Copies of the notice or posters may be placed in suitable public locations, such as a clubhouse, libraries, etc. or delivered through established contact methods. In some cases the block captains could invite those in their area using a friendly contact and flyer. Make sure to include factual information about crime in the Watch area.

### Search for Resources

There are a number of resources for information and supplies needed in the creation and function of a block watch group. The various city departments, county, police, schools, neighborhood development not for profits, prevention coalitions, churches and local businesses all may have dedicated staff to assist you in your efforts. The best way to look for this type of assets is to determine who benefits from having their resources in your neighborhood. Then be prepared to present yourself as an organized resource to those people. By using these you will find that necessities such as signs, meeting locations, information and supplies may be provided or offered at a reduced cost. Understand what the group benefits by working with your organization and plan your offers accordingly.

### Organizing a Watch Program

Even though Neighborhood Watch is a relatively simple concept for preventing neighborhood crime, it requires considerable organization if citizens and the Police Department are to realize its many benefits. Without a strong organization, members often lose interest after the crime problem has diminished. Once interest has waned it has proven difficult to restore. When in the beginning phases of the creation, develop ideas of projects and goals that are longer term, in addition to the initial short term crime patterns.

The following organizational considerations are essential to a successful Neighborhood Watch Program:

- Spell out roles and responsibilities.
- Adopt bylaws and elect officers.
- Decentralize planning and work.
- Assign tasks and establish standing committees.
- Find the best communication method within your group to keep in touch with the members. Use personal contacts and daily interaction.
- Plan for, and train, new leaders. Be careful not to ask too much of existing ones.
- Learn your participants' skills and utilize personal and business contacts.
- Don't be too formal, most people lead busy lives, and a little fun is important in asking for continued involvement.
- Conduct meetings on time and efficiently. Try not to overload and overstay your audience.

### Neighborhood Watch Committee

The Coordinator and Block Captains are the most important positions in a Watch program. They provide leadership and coordination and serve as leaders of the Steering Committee. The Committee should assume the following responsibilities:

- To maintain and expand the program to include as many residents as possible
- To set program objectives and strategies with a goal of making the neighborhood a safer place.
- To establish and maintain files and activity records.

- To plan and notify members of Watch meetings.
- To assess the success of the program and provide feedback to residents.

### **Responsibilities of the Coordinator**

- Serve as liaison between the Police Department's Community Interaction Officer and the Block Captains.
- The coordinator is responsible for distributing information.
- Serve as chairman of Neighborhood Watch committee.
- Preside over Neighborhood Watch Committee meetings.
- Seek program resources and material and make them available to Block Captains for distribution to residents.
- Direct the activities of the Block Captains
- Provide crime reports to your Neighborhood Homes Association if one exists in your area.
- Maintain a master membership list.
- Work with Block Captains to develop specific crime prevention projects for the neighborhood.
- Attend police district coordinators' meetings.

### **Responsibilities of Block Captains**

- Serve as liaison between the Watch Coordinator and the residents.
- Recruit new watch members, striving for 100% participation on your block.
- Assist the coordinator in planning and conducting meetings and activities
- Maintain a list of block members, including name, address, phone and E-mail.
- Assist in notifying residents of meetings and training sessions.
- Designate work assignments as needed. These may include secretarial, fundraising to purchase signs, electric engravers, written materials, walking or mobile patrol, vacation house checks, checking on elderly, as well as watching residents' houses during all necessary absences, such as accidents and funerals, etc.

### **Roll of the Police Department**

Involvement of the KCPD in a Neighborhood Watch program typically includes:

- Providing initial training of Watch Coordinators, Committee members, Captains, and Block Watchers.
- Maintaining contact with Watch Coordinators.
- Meeting with the Neighborhood Watch group on a periodic basis to address crime problems and plan strategies.
- Providing crime awareness training to citizens.
- Serving as a resource for acquiring speakers for meetings, obtaining handout materials and visual aids.

## **Elements of the Block Watch Program**

Neighborhood Watch is simply a crime prevention concept that calls for citizens to watch out for their neighbor's safety and security. Knowing this, criminals are generally unwilling to risk detection, so they either don't commit the crime or go elsewhere. Because neighborhoods are different in terms of geography, population and the extent and nature of crime, Neighborhood Watch programs must vary from area to area if they are to be successful. Even though criminals may be discouraged from committing a crime in one neighborhood using passive observation, they may be willing to risk it in a more rural community if the same strategy is used.

### **Passive Observation**

Passive observation calls for residents to familiarize themselves with the normal activities in their neighborhood in order to detect suspicious or unusual events. Passive observation generally is not recommended except for the smallest and most compact neighborhoods. Geography, landscaping and lighting are some of the factors considered in determining whether passive observation is suitable for your neighborhood.

### **Walking Patrols**

Many Neighborhood Watch programs assign residents to walk within a several block area to actively look for suspicious activities. Usually, the walking patrols are done in pairs, husband and wife or two neighbors, during hours when crime is most likely to occur. Upon observing suspicious activity they should notify the Police Department immediately if the incident is in progress, and also report it to the block captain. Unique decals on residents' automobiles are helpful in identifying vehicles that do not belong in the neighborhood.

### **Mobile Patrols**

Such patrols are frequently employed in communities where homes are spaced a considerable distance apart, making passive observations and walking patrols impractical. Mobile patrols are normally used during high-crime periods and many use hand held radios, or cell phones to notify the police of suspicious activity. However, each member involved should receive proper training from the Police, before participating in mobile patrols. \* Note, Neighborhood Watch is designed to prevent, detect and report crimes. Enforcement action is **always** left up to the police.

## **Components of the Block Watch Program**

### **Neighborhood Watch Signs**

Signs are important to the program because they put the potential criminal on notice that a Watch Program exists in the area and that the citizens are trained to observe and report to the police. More importantly the signs are there to be reminders for the neighbors to watch out for themselves.

### **Neighborhood Watch Decals**

In many communities each home participating in the program is designated by a decal. These decals are reminders that an active Watch program exists, and equally important, that the residents are very security conscious.

### Vehicle Stickers

Many Neighborhood Watch groups provide distinctive vehicle stickers that identify residents' vehicles. Obviously, this does not suggest that vehicles without stickers are necessarily suspicious, but indicate that they may require a closer look.

### Mobile Patrol Vehicle Identification

Mobile patrols often utilize magnetic signs on the sides or top of their vehicles identifying them as "Neighborhood Watch" Patrols.

### Property Identification

Operation ID is a program sponsored by the Police Department, in which you mark your property with an engraving tool, using your Drivers License number, followed by KCMO (example: L123456789KCMO). After marking, you complete an inventory list of your property.

### **Other Neighborhood Block Watch Projects Include:**

- Proposing crime prevention legislation to local and state officials.
- Regularly scheduled calls or visits to elderly residents.
- Assigning specific residents to check homes and property of neighbors who are away from home on vacation or for other reasons.
- Participation of citizens on each block in first aid and CPR instruction.
- Conducting bicycle safety inspections and clinics for area children.
- Finger printing neighborhood children and adults.
- Sponsoring picnics, dances, and other social activities, to increase area participation.
- Notifying the proper authorities of damaged or missing street signs, traffic control signs and street lights.
- Surveying the neighborhood to ensure proper house identification. Clear and visible house numbers are vital to police, fire and rescue personnel in locating your home in an emergency.
- Welcome packages for new neighbors with a small gift, and an information packet listing various social activities within the neighborhood.

### **Meeting and Training Sessions**

- Individual Neighborhood Watch groups should conduct meetings periodically to discuss activity in their neighborhoods. Coordinators and block captains should attend, but also encourage block watch members' attendance.
- Each Police District Station may conduct occasional meetings for the coordinators from all districts' watch groups.
- Suspicious Activity Reporting Guidelines.

## **Why Call the Police**

Successful efforts to combat crime require the cooperative involvement of police and citizens. The Police cannot be everywhere. For this reason success against crime prevention relies on citizen cooperation and involvement. Many crimes could be prevented if citizens recognized suspicious activity and notified police. Residents should become familiar with neighborhood individuals and or circumstances and should be able to recognize suspicious activity and notify police immediately.

*Often citizens fail to call the police because they are unsure of what is considered suspicious, or they hesitate to call the police until they see a crime actually being committed. If in doubt, call the police immediately, don't wait to talk it over with friends or neighbors. Valuable police response time is wasted this way.*

*Don't be concerned about bothering the police, because you won't be. Don't dwell on any possible embarrassment you might feel if your call should prove to be unfounded. Think instead of what could have happened had you not called.*

*If the situation changes you can always call back and update the information by either cancelling the call or providing additional suspect activity information. This will make the response priority more accurate and more importantly, increase the safety for all involved.*

## What is Considered Suspicious Activity?

Here are some examples of what to look for. They may be helpful in determining when you should call for assistance.

- A stranger walking between, or around a neighbor's home while your neighbor is absent or someone crossing yours or your neighbor's yard, for no apparent lawful purpose.
- Someone trying to open a neighbor's door.
- A moving truck or van pulled up to a neighbor's home while they are gone. Remember, burglaries often occur at times when they should be most obvious in broad daylight, in full view of observers, while making no effort to hide their movements.
- Someone carrying property such as television sets, radios, stereos, etc., at an unusually late hour, or in an unusual place, especially if it does not appear that the property is newly purchased.
- Door-to-door salesmen who solicit at a residence that has a "no soliciting" sign posted at or near the front door, and showing little or no knowledge of the product they're promoting.
- The sound of glass breaking could signal a possible burglary, vandalism or theft in progress.
- Anyone peering into vehicles while walking down the street or someone removing tags, gasoline or parts from a car.
- Someone attempting to enter a car using a coat hanger or other device. Never assume that it is the owner who may have locked his keys in the car. Be suspicious of anyone tampering with a car.
- An improperly parked car, an abandoned vehicle, or someone leaving one car and driving away in another. These may be signs of a stolen car.
- Individuals sitting in vehicles in a neighborhood, who appear to be strangers.
- Persons loitering around schools, parks and isolated areas, or in the neighborhood, could be possible sex offenders or burglars.
- Business transactions conducted from a vehicle, especially around schools, playgrounds or parks and often on a regular basis, could indicate drug sales, or dealing in stolen property.
- Offers of goods or repair work at unusually low prices could be indicative of stolen property or other fraudulent activity.
- All fights, screams and loud noises such as explosions and gun shots, could mean that crimes or life threatening events are occurring.
- Property such as jewelry, or a television set in the back seat of a car, or unusually large amounts of property stored in a residence, back packs or luggage shoved in the bushes could well be stolen property.

This is just a short list of possible situations, if you are in doubt, *call*. If you fear clogging the 911 system, or bumping a high priority call, use the police non-emergency number 234-5111. It is answered by the same staff, but secondary to the 911 calls.

If an answering machine responds when you call 911 **DO NOT HANG UP**. If you do, a call taker has to determine if your hang up call needs to be handled before answering the next call. Your new call will now be at the bottom of the call cue. Remember, stay on the line, you will get better and faster service.

### **What the Police Need to Know When You Call 911**

The most necessary information police officers need:

***What happened, when, where it happened, direction of travel, descriptions of suspect and vehicles, and are any weapons involved?***

Description of Suspect(s) and Vehicle(s):

Following is a guide to the information the police need when providing them with a description of a vehicle or person.

- Name or nickname of the subject
- Race
- Sex
- Age, give approximate ranges if necessary, 20-25, 30-35, etc.
- Height, 140-150, 180-190, etc.
- Hair, which should include style, length and color if possible.
- Facial Hair - Beard, goatee, mustache
- Complexion, Tattoos
- Clothing – Hat, Shirt, Coat, Shoes
- Weapons
- Type of automobile, SUV, car, truck, etc.
- Age of vehicle
- Make
- Model
- Color
- License number and state issued
- Description of property or other items in possession of subject
- Anything that stands out about the person's appearance.

A Suspect Identification form is included in this packet. Keep the form next to your telephone as a quick reference guide when recording a subject's description.

## **Operation Identification Program**

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department is very concerned about the increase in burglaries and larcenies taking place here. Your participation in a crime prevention program is vital to combatting these crimes. Join "Operation Identification," and help the community recognize the criminals, strive to achieve successful prosecution, and return of your property.

The Operation Identification Program is a vital part of the Neighborhood Block Watch Program. Engrave your valuables with your Missouri Drivers License number, followed by the letters KCMO, (Example L123456789KCMO). Then inventory your property.

### **What to Have Engraved**

The following items are often stolen and should be marked with your Operation ID number, even if they already contain a manufacturer's serial number: Television, Radios Cameras and Video Recorders, Computers, Guns, Musical Instruments, Watches, Jewelry, Power Tools, Bicycles, etc.

### **What Items Not to Engrave**

This often raises the question, what items should I not engrave? Consider antiques, silverware, some items of jewelry, or other things that may lose their value if permanently marked. In such cases we suggest that you not engrave them or at least not in a conspicuous place. Instead, take a color photograph, or video tape each item. The video or photograph should be sufficient evidence to prove ownership. If your jewelry is expensive or has sentimental value consider taking it to a trusted jeweler and have it marked or professionally appraised for identification.

### **Where to Engrave Items**

Your Identification number should be readily visible to the police officer examining the recovered item, so mark items in a place that can be observed without taking it apart. Don't mark on a removable part or on a part that is not an essential item. The thief may take that part off and replace it with a non-marked one. Mark any item that can be marked in more than one place so that if the obvious number is removed, a less conspicuous one can still be used to trace the property. Using the proper tool you can mark on any hard surface, metal, ceramic, plastic, glass or wood.

### **Second and Third Ownership**

Some property may change hands many times. It is suggested that you notify the purchaser or person who receives your item in trade that you have marked it with your identification number, and suggest that the new owner put his number below yours. The item can then be traced from one owner to another.

### **Make a Permanent Record**

Record a short description of the items, the make, model, size, serial number and the location of engraved Identification Number. Also, record the items that cannot be marked, such as stamp collections, coin collections, credit cards, bank books, securities, furs, jewelry, paintings and antiques. A color photo of all your property will be helpful if the property is stolen or destroyed.

Store these records in a safe place. It will be useful to both the police and your insurance company. If your property is stolen, the record will enable the police to enter your property into a national computer bank that is used by police throughout the country. If your property is recovered outside the Kansas City area there is a greater chance of it being returned to you, and for charges to be filed against the thief or accomplices.

## **Home Security**

### **Interior lighting**

Maintaining an appearance of occupancy, even when your residence is vacant, is essential to thwarting burglary attempts. Timers that automatically regulate the interior lighting of a home can create such a deception. Timers should be turned on any time you're away from home: vacation, when you're dining out, or during work hours. For the most realistic deception, several timers and lamps should be used to simulate occupancy. For instance, a radio and lamp in the living room might be on from 6:30 pm, until 11:00 pm: at 11:00 a lamp might go on in the bathroom until 11:30. The lamp normally would be on in the bedroom until midnight. This would indicate to anyone watching the house that it was occupied, and the residents were going to bed. During the day, leave drapes and shades in the normal at home position.

### **House Numbers**

Make sure that police, fire, and paramedics can easily locate your home in the event of an emergency. Have your house numbers clearly mounted on a high contrasting background. Make sure the numbers are illuminated all night if possible. Avoid using the polished brass numbers because at night they are extremely difficult to read. Also, it helps for your house numbers to be painted on the curb in front of your home.

### **Exterior Lighting**

Exterior lighting is extremely important to residential security and studies show it is the most cost effective deterrent to crime. Each exterior doorway should be illuminated to prevent a burglar from concealing his activities. Yard lights and windows should be lighted to prevent concealment. Ornamental porch and yard post lamps are a means of eliminating blind spots. Yard lights and entrance lights can be equipped with sensors that will turn the lights on at dusk and off at dawn. It is recommended that every resident should leave a front light on all night, illuminating your house so that it is visible from the street and your neighbor's residences. It is also recommended that you place a motion detector on the light in the rear of your residence alerting you and your neighbors to movement in the back yard of your house. Lighting is one of the most important deterrents to criminals, because they don't want to be seen.

### **Landscaping**

To eliminate hiding spots keep doorways, windows and porches clear of planted bushes and flowers. Remember that the bushes that provide you with privacy also give a burglar a place to hide. Prune large trees, low limbs can provide second story access. A well maintained lawn is a very effective clue that someone is at home and cares about their property. Plan your landscaping with both privacy and security in mind. Locked gates and well-maintained fences can increase the difficulty of entry. Walks and driveways should be kept free from offering concealment to intruders.

### **Do not Publicize Vacation Plans**

Inform one or two people of your vacation plans, such as a trusted neighbor who can watch over your home while you are gone. Newspapers should be stopped while you're away and also ask them to pick up any uncancelled deliveries. **DO NOT INFORM ANY OF YOUR DELIVERY PEOPLE THAT YOU WILL BE ON VACATION.** Do not forget to arrange to have the lawn mowed or snow removed in order to maintain a lived-in appearance. Be friendly, talk with your neighbors regarding your concern about burglaries. Tell them what you are doing to protect your home. Ask them to notify the police department of any suspicious persons or activities around your home. Good Neighbors make safe neighborhoods.

### Key Control

True security begins with key control. When you move into a home or apartment always have the locks re-keyed. You don't have to replace the lock itself as re-keying will render the previous keys useless. This procedure should also be followed if you lose your keys. Any licensed locksmith can change the tumblers in your outside locks quickly and inexpensively. Do not leave an emergency key under the door mat, on top of the door frame or in any other hiding spot. Never have a name or licensed tag attached to your house keys. If keys are lost or stolen you may soon have an unwelcome visitor. Keep car keys and house keys separate. This way your house keys are never left in the possession of a stranger, when your car is parked somewhere. Remove the keys from your vehicle when it's in the garage as there is a possibility the burglar will use your car as a means of carrying off your other property.

### Exterior Doors

It is important that all exterior doors be of solid core construction, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick. The door frame needs to be of solid construction as well, and should be equipped with a proper strike plate. Hollow core or composition board doors can easily be battered or bored, allowing easy entry.

The standard for residential pedestrian door's construction is foam core steel. These doors provide great strength and good insulation from weather. The weakness is that their outer steel coatings are independent of each other and easily split in the center when force is applied to the deadbolt. This causes one side of the door to bend and the lock to rotate, allowing the door to open. This can be fixed with an inexpensive door wrap that is installed around the door, under the shell of the deadbolt.

The construction industry is constantly developing new fixture designs and in the end you will want a door that is strong, yet slightly flexible, to allow any force applied to be absorbed and the lock's integrity to be maintained.

The interior door leading from the garage to the house should be considered as an exterior door. This door is sometimes a hollow core and should be replaced with a solid core one using a quality deadbolt lock and secured hinge pins.

One door that is easily overlooked and needs to be locked is pet entrance doors.

Garage doors should always be closed and locked whenever you are away from home. This prevents burglars from access to tools which they could use to force further entry into your home and also offering them the opportunity to steal cars, tools, ladders, (for access to two-story windows), bicycles and other property. Use a good quality padlock to secure your garage door. There are many padlocks on the market from which to choose. Some can also be keyed to your house key. Do not try to economize on a padlock that will not give you the protection you need. The most common assault on a padlock is with a large bolt cutter or pry bar. The following description which you can take to the locksmith or hardware store is the minimum standard for an exterior padlock:

- Hardened steel, 9/32 inch shackle. Stainless steel is recommended.
- Double locking mechanism, heel and toe.
- Five pin tumbler.
- A key retaining feature. This prevents you from removing the key before you have secured the padlock.

Combination padlocks do not provide good security. The bodies of these locks are very weak. Never leave your padlock unlocked: This creates a possibility to have the padlock removed and an unauthorized key made and the lock returned to its original location.

For overhead sectional rollup doors, drill a hole of proper size in the door track just above one of the guide rollers while the door is in the closed position to install a padlock. Many doors are installed with pre-drilled holes that will accommodate this security feature without having to drill. Or, install eyebolts on the inside top of the garage door and the door frame. When the garage door is closed, a padlock can secure the bolts and prevent opening of the door.

### Electric Garage Door Openers

Periodically check the door to make sure it is adjusted to prevent the bottom from being lifted up. If you have windows in your garage, install the same security items as recommended for the windows in your home. Hang curtains or take steps to obscure the view to prevent a potential burglar from window shopping for valuables. If a burglar gets into your garage, he will probably have as much time as he needs to gain entry to your home through the connecting door because he will be out of sight. In addition, most garages offer burglars a wide selection of tools that can be used in gaining entry to your house.

### Sliding Glass Doors

Sliding glass doors present a major security problem if they do not have the proper locks and if special steps are not taken to prevent removal of the door. A sliding glass door is lifted into position when installed and therefore, must be lifted from its tack to be removed. To prevent this, if your door slides on the inside, it is recommended that 1¼ inch pan head (large head) sheet metal screws be inserted into the top of the door frame at both ends, and the middle. These screws should be adjusted so that the door barely clears them when it is operated. Wooden dowels can also be placed in the floor track to prevent the door from being opened; however a manufactured folding bar is far more effective.

The best lock for a sliding glass door is a deadlock which utilizes a bore pin tumbler cylinder and is operable by a key from the inside. The lock bolt should engage the strike sufficiently so that it will not be disengaged by any amount of movement. When the existing inside pull has to be changed in order to accommodate a new deadlock, inside cylinder pull is recommended as a replacement. Supplemental locks can be installed at the top or bottom to prevent the door from being pried open or lifted from its tracks.

### Deadbolt Locks

Use one-inch deadbolt locks on exterior doors. The best defense for a good solid exterior door is a deadbolt lock with a one inch throw bolt. If there is no window within 18 inches of the door lock the bolt may be operated from inside by a thumb turn. If your door has glass panes within 18 inches of the lock a double cylinder deadbolt lock is recommended so that a key is required from either side of the door. When installing a deadbolt, attach the strike plate (the jamb fastening that receives the bolt in the locking position) to the door with four to six, three inch screws. The screws should penetrate through the frame to a structural component.

Both single and double cylinder deadbolt locks should meet the following criteria in order to provide good security.

- The bolt must extend a minimum of one inch and contain a hardened steel insert. .
- The deadbolt should contain a cylinder guard to prohibit twisting of the lock with a wrench or pliers.
- It must be made of solid metal - not hollow casting or stamped metal.
- The key-way should contain a five pin tumbler system to increase the difficulty of picking the lock. The connecting screws that hold the lock together must be on the inside and made of case hardened steel.
- No exposed screw heads should be on the outside.
- The connecting screws must be at least one-fourth inch in diameter and go into solid metal stock, not screw posts.

The deadbolt lock is only half of the locking mechanism. The other half of the deadbolt lock is the strike plate. The strike plate is usually supplied with the lock at the time of purchase. If at all possible, use one of the many reinforced strike plates currently on the market. Many insert between the trim and the structural component of the adjoining wall. Their cost is reasonable and they usually significantly upgrade the holding power of the strike plate under attack.

### Home Surveys

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department can provide a home security survey to assist the homeowner to “Think Like a Burglar” in a brief walk around their own home. You may spot things you have overlooked. If previously unobserved weaknesses in security are found, such as the persistent ringing of a telephone that can be heard, that is a direct indication that someone is not at home. Don’t leave an outgoing message saying that you are on vacation, or have your calls forwarded, or possibly even using a house sitter. The following ideas can be addressed with simple and inexpensive solutions, such as using “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” principles that have been demonstrated to be very effective at deterring crime.

### Summary

We have given you many good reasons to develop a block watch, and a large amount of information on crime prevention. Now you’re asking yourself “where I go from here.” Go out and seek information on volunteering, enlisting volunteers and the best practices on working with people. This information can be found on the internet that includes assistance groups and many kinds of reference books.

Always remember your partnership with the police department for help in the continuing success of your Neighborhood Watch, but also don’t forget to find a friend and start a Watch today so you’ll be better prepared tomorrow.