



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH RANCHO PALOS VERDES

(Block Captain)

(E-Mail)

(Phone)

Dear Resident:

Your block is now a part of the Rancho Palos Verdes Neighborhood Watch program. Following is a summary of the program, what it does for you, and your role in making the program successful.

WHAT IS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH? Neighborhood Watch is a proven and effective means of reducing crime. It is also the framework for our Emergency Preparedness program. The concept is based on neighbors working together with law enforcement to curtail crime. Approximately 90% of our city's single-family streets, as well as several multi-unit complexes, are in our organized citywide program resulting in a dramatic drop in crime in those areas. We have seen a measurable difference in crime rates between areas in an organized program, and those without such a program. This is because neighbors report all suspicious activities to the police, network all crime activity and mutually watch out for each other.

RPV Neighborhood Watch was started in 1992. In 2006 we were selected by the National Sheriff's Association and the Department of Justice Assistance as "The Most Exemplary Neighborhood Watch in the United States". In 2020 we were deemed the 4th Safest City in California.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEM As a member of an organized Neighborhood Watch, your street is part of a citywide crime prevention network and warning system. An Area Coordinator liaisons with Neighborhood Watch, the Sheriff's Dept., and Block Captains. Crime warnings are e-mailed to Block Captains who, in turn, disseminate to Block Assistants and participating Neighborhood Watch residents. (In case of emergency, we may use phones.) This network is used in the following ways:

- To alert residents of current citywide crime activity and suspicious persons.
- To alert residents of crimes, missing persons (or pets) in their own area.
- To alert residents of phone, Internet and other scams.
- To alert residents of ALPR (Automatic License Plate Reader) activities.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN MAKING THE PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL?

- **GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS** Your neighbors are the key people who watch over your home. Get to know them. Please give your e-mail number to your Block Captain so they can forward the Crime Bulletins to you. Neighborhood Watch e-mails **only** to Block Captains (always blind). We do not want nor use other residents' e-mail. We also encourage blocks to have yearly potlucks or get-togethers and invite their Sheriff's Deputies.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY** ***We are very strict about keeping residents' information confidential.*** No one, besides Block Captains and Area Coordinators, know residents' names, addresses, phone numbers or e-mail numbers.
- **WATCH OUT FOR STRANGERS** Report any suspicious people that are parked in your area, driving around, or knocking on your door looking for someone else or asking for work. They may be casing your neighborhood to see who is home. ***Make a habit of writing down descriptions of suspicious people and cars, including license plates. If you have a feeling that***

something doesn't look right, please call 539-1661, your local Sheriff's Station, and ask them to investigate. Then always notify your Block Captains so they can network to others.

- **PREVENT BURGLARIES AND ROBBERIES** Keep all doors, windows, and garage doors locked when you are not home. Burglars steal items from open garages in 30 seconds. Keep vehicles locked at ALL times and don't leave anything visible that you don't want stolen. Burglars mostly want jewelry and electronics. Hide jewelry outside of your bedroom. Engrave your California Driver's License number on electronic equipment, which better assures its return to you.
- **POLICY ON SOLICITORS** Under a Supreme Court ruling, anyone can solicit without a permit. However, under a City Code, solicitation is not allowed at any home that displays a DO NOT DISTURB or NO SOLICITING decal (available at City Hall or from your Block Captain). Notify your Block Captain of all suspicious solicitors.
- **REPORT ALL CRIMES, NO MATTER HOW SMALL** Sheriff Dept. computers track crimes and criminals, even parts of license plates. Unreported crimes skew the real statistics and could result in your area receiving less patrol activity than it deserves. ***After you notify the Sheriff's Dept. of a crime or a suspicious activity, or if you have been a victim, notify your Block Captain immediately so that they, and the Area Coordinator in your area, can alert the other residents. Quickly reporting and networking crimes facilitates faster apprehension.***
- **PETS, PEOPLE, INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA** We will network members' lost or found pets, children and other missing residents through our Neighborhood Watch network. ***We do not allow the NW network to be used for political, commercial or business advertising purposes. Our network can only be used for accurate and vetted information. We do not network NW information through social media or the Internet - mediums which are non-private, often inaccurate, and your personal information is insecure. We ask that you honor this request.***

IDENTITY THEFT Identity theft, along with mail thefts and package delivery thefts, are serious problems in our city. **Never** give out social security or other personal information over the phone, mail, or Internet. Shred all personal documents. Get a locking mailbox. Be alert for mail theft by using public mailboxes for outgoing mail, and have a neighbor pick up your mail (or packages) when you're gone. ***Never put the mailbox flag up!*** Many identity fraud cases start with theft of checks, bank statements and credit cards from mailboxes.

VACATIONS Always notify a close neighbor or your Block Captain when you go on vacation.

SUPPORT YOUR BLOCK CAPTAIN AND ASSISTANTS They are the life-blood of your Neighborhood Watch. Without them, the program dies and you will lose all contact with Neighborhood Watch and the Sheriff's Dept. Offer to help as a Block Assistant and attend neighborhood activities. ***Remember, an effective neighborhood watch is one in which all neighbors contribute!***

Neighborhood Watch is managed by Volunteer Area Coordinators and Block Captains. The program is totally supported by *voluntary*, tax-deductible \$5 donations, which pay for the total cost of the program including signs, office supplies, decals, meetings and educational materials.

SUMMARY Building walls around our lives and our property hasn't given us more sense of safety or peace of mind. On the other hand, people in our city have learned that tearing down walls and building bridges of trust between neighbors and law enforcement has greatly added to their peace of mind and quality of life. ***After all is said and done, it is the community and our neighborhoods working together who have made the difference in the quality and safety of our lives. Please support Neighborhood Watch!***