





Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department

Crime Prevention Program


CrimeWatch™

Information and Training Manual

*Great neighbors making great neighborhoods
by being concerned citizens taking an active part
in protecting their community*

Presented by


- ✓ Shirley Purvitis, ICCPS
- ✓ Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Dept.
- ✓ Crime Prevention/CrimeWatch™



On a national average, there is approximately one law enforcement officer for every 2,000 citizens. However, not all these officers are actively patrolling the streets.

Some of these officers work in administrative, investigative and correction positions and take off days, vacations, etc. Much of law enforcement's patrol activity is reactive rather than proactive. In most cases, police respond to a crime after it has been committed.


CrimeWatch™ is a crime prevention program. It is set up to prevent crime from happening and to allow the police to respond before there is a victim or property loss.



Would you rather your neighbors watch your house and neighborhood and stop crime before it occurs or just ignore all the happenings in the neighborhood?

CrimeWatch™ brings us back to the '50s, before the invention of air conditioning and television. When every night people would sit on their porches and enjoy a conversation with their neighbors.


CrimeWatch™ is about not thinking you're sticking your nose into someone's business when you see they're out of town and their kids throw a wild party. It's about not being embarrassed when you see a strange car in the driveway and call your neighbor at work to ask about it.



Our Local CrimeWatch™ program is based on the
National Neighborhood Watch Program
(which was started in Indianapolis in 1975)

CrimeWatch™ is internationally recognized by
Crime Prevention groups as one of the most effective
tools at the prevention of victimization of persons and
communities.


CrimeWatch™ encourages citizens to become more
involved in the protection of their communities.



Your role in the program is to report suspicious activities and crime to the proper agency.

The program ensures citizens who are registered members of the program can remain anonymous to the general public.

To have a good CrimeWatch™ program, the police first need YOUR help. They need you to be the eyes and ears in your neighborhood. The uniformed police cannot be on every street and in every house, but YOU the citizen ARE. You know if you drive down your street who belongs there and who does not. A police officer on patrol may drive down your street once or twice daily.

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a silver metal spiral on the left side. The notebook is open to a page with a light cream or yellowish background. The text is centered on the page.

You know if a guy walking into your neighbor's yard belongs there. You know that the 15 year old that just drove off on a bike isn't a friend or relative.

These are things you can see that the uniformed officer never would.

The cooperation of citizens with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department makes a strong CrimeWatch™ program and will help in the deterrence of crime.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Citizens banding together to help local law enforcement in identifying and then reporting suspicious activities in their neighborhood.


This is *NOT* a vigilante effort; rather, a combined vigilance over the neighborhood.

ORGANIZATION:

The CrimeWatch™ Program objectives can be accomplished by organizing a neighborhood, street or apartment/condominium building or complex.

One person is designated as “Block Captain.”

It is the captain’s responsibility to organize their area and maintain a roster of residents who desire to be members of the CrimeWatch™ Program



When a new resident moves into the neighborhood it is the captain's job to inform them of the program and introduce other neighbors.

***Note:* This can also be done by the victim assistance person for the area.**

The captain also provides up-to-date crime information to the neighbors when the Police Department alerts them of a problem.

METHODS OF REPORTING:

A. Observe - Observe the suspicious activity as inconspicuously as possible.

DO NOT attempt to confront a suspect!


B. Identify - Try to identify:

1. Facts of the crime (as many as possible).
2. Location (house/street number and address, description).
3. Description of person(s) involved.
4. Description of vehicle(s), if involved.

C. Report - Once a crime has been identified:

1. Call the police at **327-3811** or (911 for emergencies). Never call your Police District Roll Call for a crime in progress. They can not dispatch officers.
2. Remain calm.
3. State the type of crime.
4. State the location of the crime.
5. Report as many facts as possible.

Refer to your CrimeWatch™ report form.




6. If the crime is in progress, remain on the phone with the operator keeping him or her informed of the activity until an officer arrives.


7. Give the operator your name and phone number. This information is highly confidential and will not be given out over the radio, to the suspect at the scene or during any informal inquiries. At some point down the line an investigator may wish to contact you if necessary.

IDENTIFICATION OF SUSPECTS:

As a victim or witness to a crime, you can best help the investigating officer by giving an accurate and complete description of the suspect. This description should include:

1. Sex and race.
2. Age.
3. Height - estimate in blocks of 2 inches.
4. Weight - estimate in blocks of 10 pounds.
5. Build - large, small, fat or thin, as well as any distinguishing features such as tattoos, scars, glasses, missing limbs or defects.

- 
7. Hair - color, style, length.
 8. Facial hair.
 9. Eyes (color and any noticeable problems such as lazy or crossed eyes).
 10. Complexion - light, dark, poor.
 11. Clothing - color and style.
 12. Jewelry - watches, rings, earrings, bracelets or necklaces.
 13. Method and direction of escape.


A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a silver metal spiral on the left side, set against a brown background. The notebook page is cream-colored and contains text and a list.

If there is a vehicle involved, give a description of the vehicle:

1. License plate - number and state.
2. Make - Ford, Chevrolet, Nissan etc.
3. Model - Mustang, Corsica, Pathfinder.
4. Type - 2-door, 4-door, convertible, van, truck.
5. Color - black, red, blue, etc.
6. Was there damage to the vehicle?

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES:

- Someone, no matter what age, walking around the residence looking into windows or cars.
 - An individual carrying a weapon.
- Solicitors asking unusual questions. For example, someone would be asking for a subject by name but not knowing his last name.

- 
- Unusual noises for that time of day or night.
 - Telephone callers asking for credit card or bank information.
 - Individuals carrying property out of a residence or business at unusual times.
 - A specific car driving past an area repeatedly or parking while no one exits.
 - Individual running from residence or building.
 - A loud noise such as glass breaking, doors slamming, guns firing or dogs barking that do not normally do so.


COMMON SIGNS OF DRUG ACTIVITIES:

- An unoccupied house with an unusually high amount of traffic to and from, especially late at night or on the weekends.
- Double-parked cars in front of a house.
- Visitors who only visit for two or three minutes.
- Groups of people congregating on the front steps or near a residence.
- People carrying large sums of cash or valuables into a house, but leaving without them.
- A visitor counting out his money before entering a house.

HOME SECURITY:

DOORS:

- Keep them locked no matter if you're home or away.
 - Are all locks that can be opened at least 36 inches from a window?
- Are exterior doors made of a solid core (including the entry door from an attached garage)?
 - Do exterior doors have a dead bolt lock?
 - If the door hinges to the outside, are the hinge pins non-removable?
 - Does the door securely fit the doorframe?

- 
- Does the dead bolt extend sufficiently into the strike plate (at least 1 inch)?
 - Have you had your locks re-keyed since you moved into your home or apartment?
 - Are strike plates reinforced with 2-inch screws?

WINDOWS:

- Always keep them locked.
- Have double-hung windows been pinned?
- Do metal windows have auxiliary locks?
- Can windows be locked in open position to allow for ventilation, but not entry?
- Do curtains and drapes fully cover the window?
- Is the air conditioner secured from inside?

GARAGE:

- Does the door shut and lock tightly?
- Is the overhead door shut and locked in between uses?
- Are vehicle keys removed when the garage is locked?

WHEN AWAY:


- Are deliveries stopped?
- Are neighbors notified?
- Are Police notified? (Unattended house report).
 - Are lights, TVs and radios on timers?
 - Is the yard taken care of and mail picked up?

TELEPHONE SAFETY:

- If a caller will not identify himself, if the person remains silent, or at the first obscene word or lewd remark, simply HANG UP. Don't give the caller the satisfaction they are seeking.
- Always be cautious of divulging any personal information of any type to anyone on the phone.
 - Young children should be properly instructed on the importance of never revealing information to unknown callers.


IN THE HOME:


- Keep doors and windows locked at ALL times.
- Install a peephole so that you can see who is outside without having to open the door.
 - Never open the door to a stranger.
Verify identification first.
- If a stranger asks to use your phone, offer instead to make the call. Do not let them into your home.
 - Do not advertise the fact that you live alone.
- Women alone should use their first initials only in the telephone directories, on mailboxes, etc.


- 
- Never give the impression you are at home alone if strangers telephone or come to the door.
 - Don't reveal personal information to anyone on the phone or at your door. You are not required to participate in any surveys.
 - Teach children never to open the door to a stranger or reveal information on the phone.
 - Have your keys ready when approaching your home.

PREVENTION TIPS:

- If you carry a chemical device (mace), do you know how to use it? And is it where you can get it QUICKLY?
- If you own any firearms, keep them unloaded, use gunlocks, and still keep them in a safe, secure place and away from children.
- Keep all large sums of cash in a bank or secure safe hidden in the house.
- Know the numbers of local police and fire dispatches:
Use 9-1-1 for emergencies and
327-3811 for non-emergencies
for both police and fire in Indianapolis.

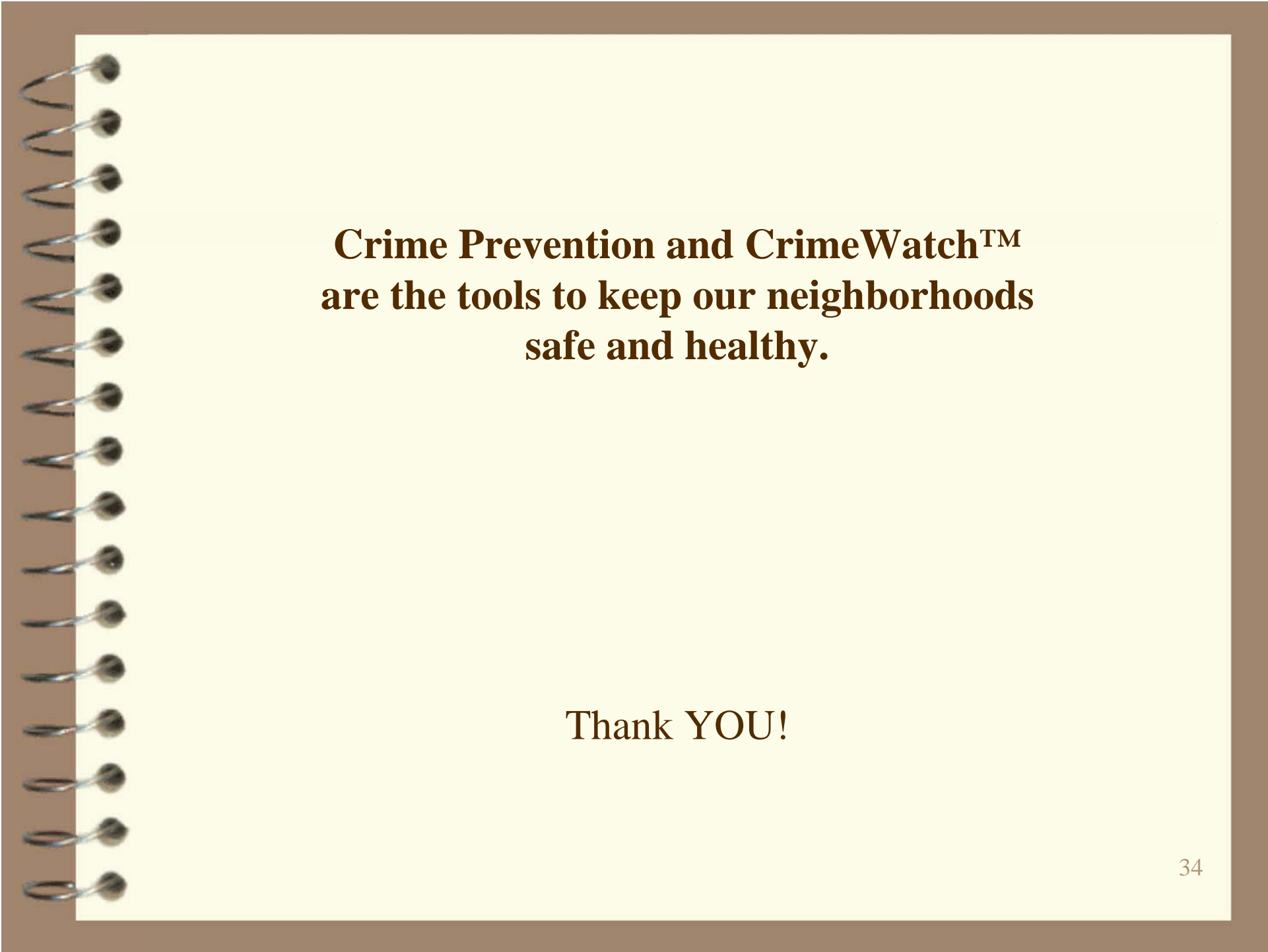
- 
- For no matter how long you leave your residence, lock all doors and windows (including garage and porches).
 - Even if you're just in the front or back yard, make sure your home is secure.
 - Do not leave easily moveable items around outside which could be of assistance to a thief in gaining entry to your house (ladders, tools for smashing windows, etc.).
 - Use motion sensitive lighting to illuminate your property.
 - An alarm system does not have to be expensive to be effective. If you have one, make sure it is working properly.

- 
- Trim shrubbery and trees or hedges near your residence. Especially under windows.
 - Look at your property from a thief's perspective in both daylight and darkness. Put your keys on the counter and then walk out of your home locking the door behind you. Measure how long it would take you to get in.
 - Videotape and inventory the exterior and interior of your home and out buildings. Then place the tape and list in a secure location, along with other valuable papers.

- 
- Make sure to keep the receipts for large ticket items such as televisions, VCR/DVD players, cameras, etc. They usually include the serial numbers and serve as reminders of cost and proof of ownership for insurance.
 - Never allow a stranger into your house to “use the phone.” If there appears to be a real emergency, you make the phone call for them while they wait outside your locked door.
 - Never leave keys in “hiding places” such as under doormats, in flower pots outside, around door-jams, frames or windowsills.

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS:

If something or someone doesn't seem right or seems out of place, **CALL THE POLICE** and give them the opportunity to decide if all is right. If you're wrong, they'll be thankful you called and if you're right, they will be even more thankful. Police are trained investigators with the duty to protect you and protect your safety.

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a brown cover and a cream-colored page. The spiral binding is on the left side. The text is centered on the page.

**Crime Prevention and CrimeWatch™
are the tools to keep our neighborhoods
safe and healthy.**

Thank YOU!

A graphic of a spiral-bound notebook with a silver metal spiral binding on the left side. The notebook is open to a blank, cream-colored page. The entire notebook graphic is set against a dark brown background.

Presenter contact information:

Shirley Purvitis, ICCPS
Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Dept.
50 N. Alabama Street, Suite T120
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317-327-3781
P1527@indygov.org