

MANVEL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Community Watch

A Guide for Starting and Maintaining a Community Watch



It is the mission of the Manvel Police Department to provide a safe environment for all citizens to work, live, and play. This mission is accomplished through quality Police services, understanding, response with compassion and performance with integrity.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY WATCH PROGRAM?

A Community Watch program is a group of people living in the same area who want to make their community safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their quality of life.

Community Watch Groups (CWG) have regular meetings to plan how they will accomplish their specific goals and assign responsibilities to group members. It is an opportunity to volunteer and work towards increasing the safety and security of our homes and our homeland. Community Watch empowers citizens and communities to become active in emergency preparedness, as well as the fight against crime and community disasters. (National Sheriff's Association Neighborhood Watch Manual)

***Citizens participating in the Community Watch program are not law enforcement officers and should never attempt to apprehend a suspect. That is a law enforcement officers' job.**

Community Watch Groups are not:

- A guarantee that crime will not occur in a community.
- Designed for members to take personal risk to prevent crime (Call the police to report crimes in progress).
- It is not a vigilante force or an organization that works outside the structure of the Manvel Police Department.



WHO IS INVOLVED IN A COMMUNITY WATCH GROUP?

There are numerous CWG throughout the country, which are designed to suit the needs of the community. Our Community Watch program is a partnership between the Manvel Police Department and the community. It is essential to a successful program that each component plays an active role and performs its responsibilities.

WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

Police Department

The Manvel Police Department will assign an officer to be the liaison between the Community Watch Coordinator and the police department. The liaison is responsible for:

- Establishing and supporting CWG.
- Providing information to the Watch Coordinator to assist them with making sound decisions for their group.
- Providing CWG with current crimes impacting the City and techniques to combat them
- Training CWG on reporting suspicious activity.
- To assist with coordinating police officer response to community issues.

Community Members

Community Members main responsibility is to remain active and observant. This is one of the most important responsibilities of a Community Member. The number of active members increases the chances of preventing crime in the community.

Watch Coordinator

- Coordinates activities of Block Captains and Block Watchers
- Recruits neighborhood residents into the Community Watch program.
- Acts as a liaison with the police department and the community
- Distributes information
- Plans and conducts crime watch meetings as needed
- Develops communication systems and maintains a phone/email tree

Block Captain (could also be Community Coordinator)

- Recruit community residents into the Crime Watch program by visiting each home, apartment, and/or business in their block, announcing the meeting and encouraging neighbors to participate.
- Distribute Crime Prevention materials to those residents who were unable to attend meetings
- Serve as a base station for Operation Identification; neighbors pick up Operation Identification materials from their Block Captain in order to participate in the program — the higher the percentage of participation, the higher the effectiveness of this program.
- Be a liaison between the residents and the Community Coordinator, assist Community Coordinator by communicating with law enforcement representatives
- Promote and distribute a copy of all scheduled Crime Watch meetings, upcoming events, and special activities to everyone on their block.

Community Watcher

- Acts as eyes and ears for their neighbors and reports suspicious activities.
- Studies crime prevention materials furnished to them
- Checks neighbors' homes when they are out of town
- Cooperates and assists the Block Captain.

COMMUNITY WATCH OBJECTIVES

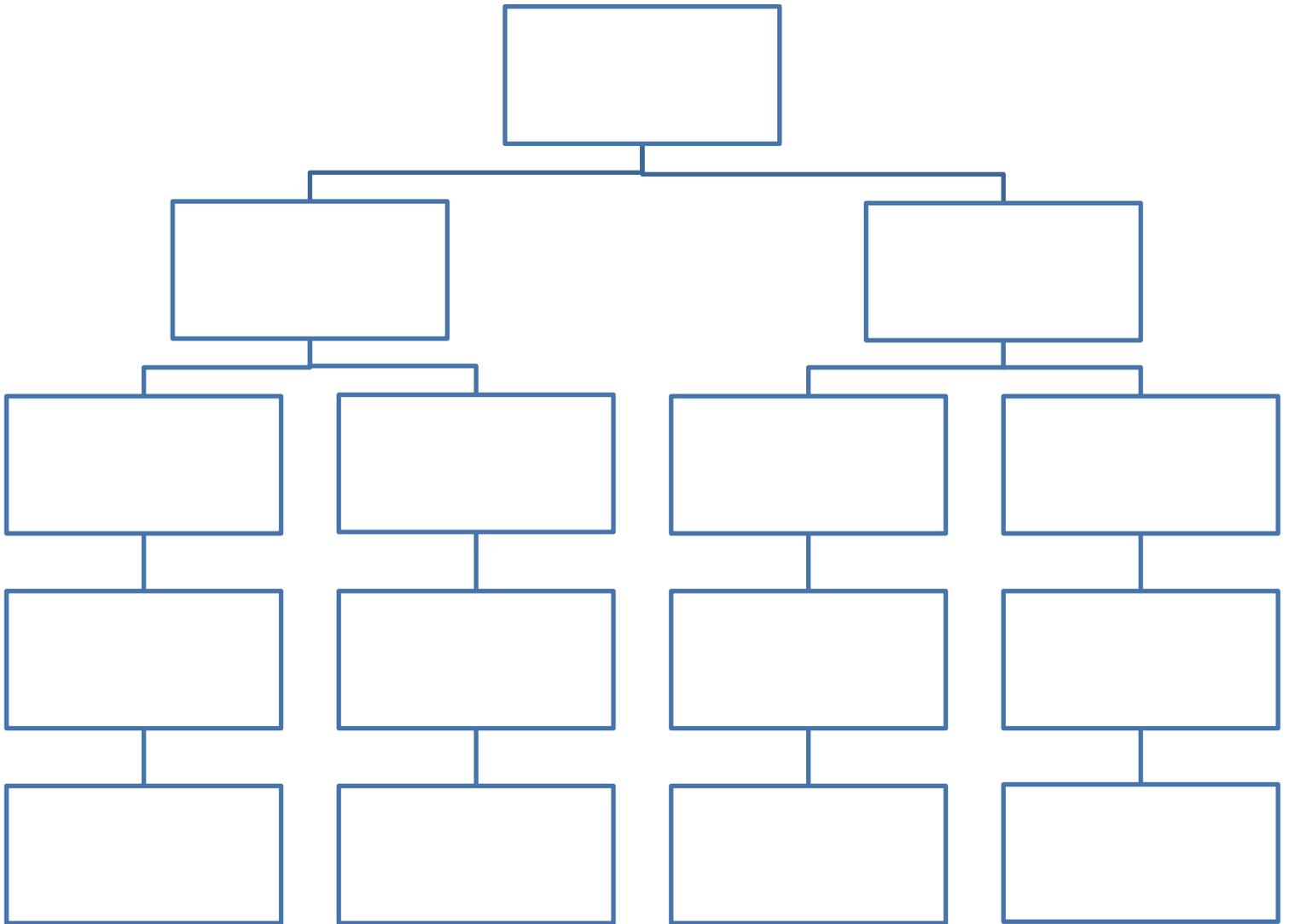
- To prevent crime by increasing crime awareness in an effort to reduce the opportunities for crime.
- To assist the police in detecting crime by promoting effective two way communication and the prompt reporting of suspicious and criminal activity.
- To reduce the fear of crime by providing information about crime risks, and ways to lower and/or mitigate the risk.
- To enhance the police/community partnership by providing effective communication.
- To build a stronger community.



HOW TO GET STARTED

- Step 1.** Contact the Manvel Police Department and ask to speak with the CWG liaison. Express your community issues, concerns and interest in starting a CWG.
- Step 2.** Talk with a few trusted neighbors and discuss the need and value of a CWG. Gauge the amount of interest in starting and maintaining a CWG.
- Step 3.** Recruit as many neighbors as possible.
- Step 4.** Call and invite the liaison to a formation meeting. The liaison will give an overview of the program. This meeting should be used to discuss and assign roles and responsibilities, within the CWG, and develop an action plan.
- Step 5.** Implement an phone tree and set up other modes of relaying community information between members. (i.e. Social Media Platforms)
- Step 6.** Hold regular meetings and community gatherings.

Phone Tree



Family Information Sheet

Family Name	Address				
Home Phone	House Color and Style				
Names & Ages 1	2	3	4	5	6
Work Phone 1	2	3	Additional Occupant Names & Ages		
Cell 1	2	3			
Email Address 1	2	3			
Vehicle Make 1	Model 1	Year 1	Color 1	License Plate Number 1	
2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3
Work Schedules					
Pets (Dogs, cats, and others that are mobile)					
Special Medical Information					
Seniors, invalids, and those that need special care					
Children's babysitter or After-School Care Contact			Phone		

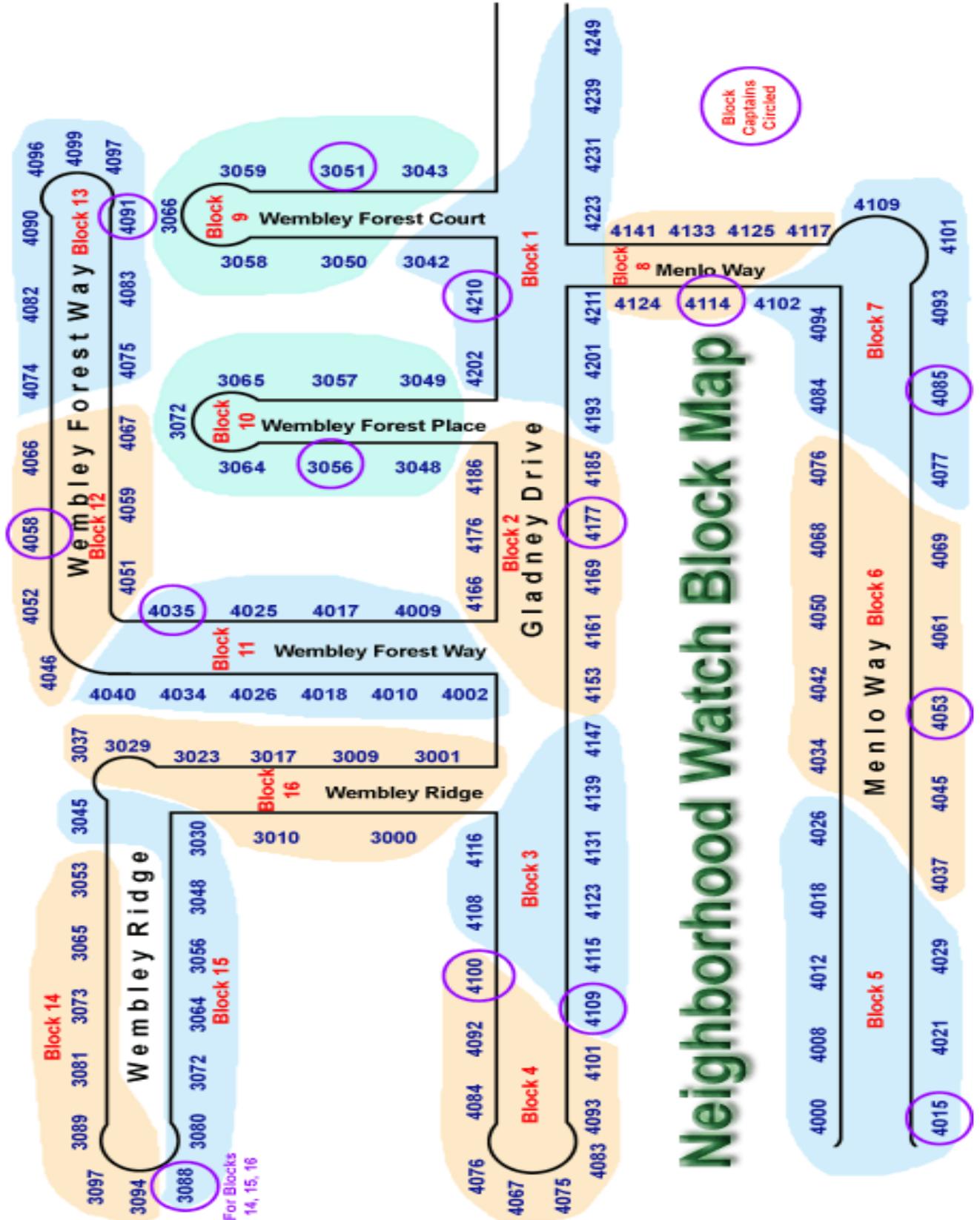
Member Roster

Community Name:

Email																	
Address																	
Phone																	
Name																	

Community Map

(EXAMPLE)



REPORTING A CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS INCIDENT

An important responsibility of a Community Watch Group is timely reporting of crimes and suspicious incidents to appropriate authorities. The Manvel Police Department have police officers on duty 24 hours a day who are trained and prepared to deal with a variety of incidents. You can report an incident by calling 911, for emergencies, and 281-489-1212 for non-emergencies. When doing so, attempt to provide as much detail as possible about the incident, including at least the following:

- Your name;
- Your location and telephone number where you can be reached;
- The nature of the problem you are reporting;
- Additional information as requested by the communications officer.



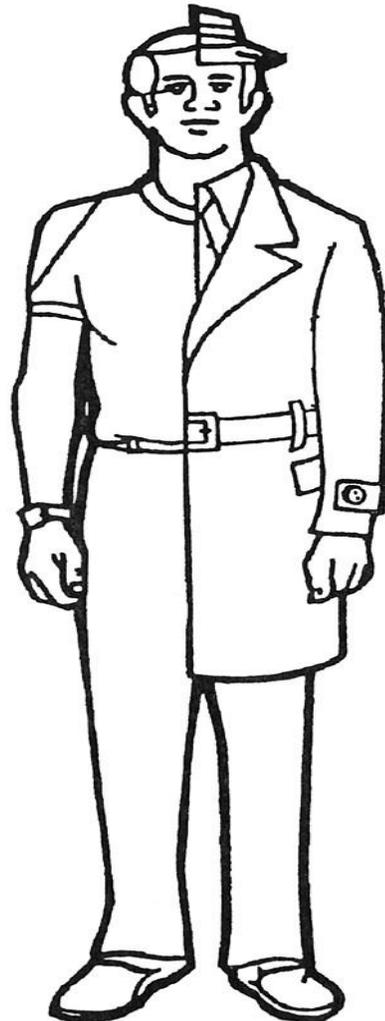
BEING A GOOD WITNESS

If you see or suspect a crime is being committed, pay particular attention to the features of the offender(s) and any vehicles involved. Try to be prepared to provide at least the following about the offenders:

When reporting a crime by telephone, remain on the phone until the communications officer is fully briefed with all the information necessary to dispatch the appropriate response personnel to the scene.

Person

- Gender
- Age, race, height, and weight (approximate);
- Hair color and style, beard and mustache;
- Notable characteristics (acne, scars, glasses mental state, etc.)
- Clothing description including color; (shirt, shorts, pants, hat, sunglasses)
- Voice
- Weapons
- Location where last seen;
- Last known direction of travel;



Vehicle

- Make (Ford, Chrysler, Nissan, Honda...etc.)
- Style (Sedan, Coupe, Pickup, SUV,,, etc.)
- Model (F-150, Accord, Mustang, Explorer...etc.)
- Color
- Tag
- Direction of travel (North, South, East, West)
- Identifying characteristics (tinted windows, bumper sticker, damage, wheels...etc.)



SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY -- PERSONS	
CIRCUMSTANCES	POSSIBLE CRIME
Going door to door in a residential area, especially if one or more persons go to the rear of the residence.	Burglary suspects or trespassers.
Waiting or loitering in front of a house or business, if business is closed or house is unoccupied.	Burglary suspects.
Forcing entrance, or entering your neighbor's house, when it is unoccupied.	Burglary, theft or trespassing.
Person running, especially if something of value is being carried.	Suspect fleeing the scene of a crime.
Person carrying property that is not wrapped, at an unusual hour.	Suspect fleeing the scene of a burglary or robbery.
Excessive foot traffic to and from a certain residence occurring on a daily or regular basis.	Vice, drug, or fence operation.
Person screaming.	Rape, assault or domestic violence.
Person loitering around cars or going car to car peering into them, especially in parking lots or on streets.	Car thief or car burglar.
Persons loitering around schools, parks, or secluded areas.	Sex offenders.
Persons offering items for sale at a very low price.	Trying to sell stolen property.
Strangers loitering or driving through a community several times.	Burglary suspects.
"Delivery Man" with a wrong address or one who asks if someone else lives there.	Burglary suspects.
Unusual noises such as gunshots, screaming, or dogs barking continuously.	Burglary, assault, rape, domestic violence, etc.
A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms.	May be injured, under influence of drugs, or needs medical attention.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY -- VEHICLES

Circumstances	Possible Crime
Slow moving vehicle, without lights, or driving appears aimless; in any location including residential streets, schools, and playgrounds.	Burglar, drug pusher, or sex offender.
Parked or occupied vehicle with one or more persons, especially if observed at an unusual hour.	Lookouts for a burglary or robbery.
Vehicle being loaded with valuables if parked by a business or unoccupied residence.	Burglary or theft in progress.
Abandoned vehicle parked on block.	Stolen car.
Vehicle containing weapons.	Robbery suspect or vehicle; selling stolen items or drugs.
Someone being forced into a vehicle, especially females or juveniles.	Kidnapping, assault, or attempted rape.
Vehicle where a business transaction is being conducted, around school or parks.	Selling stolen items or drugs.
Person attempting to forcibly enter a locked vehicle, especially in a parking lot.	Theft of a car or its contents.
Persons removing mechanical parts or accessories from a vehicle.	Theft or vandalism.
Objects thrown from a vehicle.	Disposal of contraband.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY -- PROPERTY

Circumstances	Possible Crime
Going door to door in a residential area, especially if one or more persons go to the rear of the	Burglary suspects or trespassers.
Waiting or loitering in front of a house or business, if closed or unoccupied.	Burglary suspects.
Property in homes, garages, or storage areas if collection is large, or items are in good but unused condition.	Stolen property.
Property offered for sale at very low price.	Stolen property.
Property in vehicles not normally found, especially if observed at an unusual hour, such as TV sets, stereos, guns, or auto parts.	Stolen property.
Property carried by person on foot; especially at unusual hour or place. Very suspicious if running with unwrapped property.	Property lost or stolen in a burglary or robbery.
Property being removed from or loaded into a vehicle or building at unusual hours.	Burglary or theft in progress.
Continuous repair operations at a non-business location.	Stolen property being altered.
Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or unoccupied residence.	Burglary in progress, completed burglary, or vandalism.
Sound of breaking glass.	Burglary or vandalism.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Manvel Police Department (Non-Emergency)	281-489-1212
Brazoria County Sheriff's Office (Non-Emergency)	979-864-2338
Pearland Police Department (Non-Emergency)	281- 997-4100
Alvin Police Department (Non-Emergency)	281- 388-4370
Manvel Police Department Community Relations	281-489-1212
Brazoria County Crime Stoppers	800-460-2222
Manvel Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Non- Emergency	281-519-8779
Manvel City Hall	281-489-0630
Manvel Fire Department (Non -Emergency)	281-519-8779
Poison Control	800-222-1212
Suicide Hotline	866-729-3848
Safehouse (Family Violence Shelter)	281-585-0904
Memorial Hermann Pearland	713-413-5000
Pearland Medical Center	713-770-7000
Utilities (City of Manvel) [Manvel PD (after business hours)]	832-336-4089