

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



TAKING BACK YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- People are afraid that if they act, criminals will exact revenge. You can counter this fear and protect yourself and your neighbor by working closely with police. There is safety in numbers.
- Citizens working together with each other and with the police will heighten the community's power of observation and improve neighborhood security.
- This is the first step toward reducing criminal behavior and forging a better community.

A RECENT SURVEY REVEALED THAT:

- Most people believe that crime is inevitable, that nothing can be done about it and that crime is only a police problem.
- In recent years, communities have experienced rapid change. The old well established community has been replaced by a highly transient, growing area where people seek more and more privacy.
- This lifestyle tends to promote unfamiliarity with neighbors and increases the community's vulnerability to crime.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY WATCH

- A group of people living in the same area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve the quality of life.

OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY WATCH

- Increase citizens' awareness of community crime through an informational program.
- Developing an awareness program where neighbors help watch each other's property and report suspicious persons and activities to the police departments.
- Encourage all citizens to cooperate with police in reporting crime.
- Training citizens to better secure their property and assist them in making their property more secure.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY WATCH

- Reduction in crime.
- Greater sense of security, responsibility, and personal control.
- Building community pride and unity.
- Becoming the extra “eyes and ears” of law enforcement.

USING YOUR “EYES AND EARS”

- In order to understand how to properly observe people, vehicles and incidents that may affect us, we should begin by learning what types of things to observe.

WHAT TO OBSERVE

- Physical Settings: - Specific location, time of day, day of week.
- People: - How many? What are they wearing? Describe their height, weight, ethnicity, gender.
- Vehicles: - Make, model, color and license plate?
- Routines: -Have there been reoccurring patterns or routines? How often did they occur? Who was involved?

WHAT IS SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY?

- Situations which seem “out of place” or occurring at odd or unusual times.
- A pattern of behavior at one or more locations by the same persons.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- Stranger entering an unoccupied house.
- Screaming person.
- Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices.
- Anyone removing accessories, license plates, or gas from a vehicle.
- Person entering or leaving a business after normal business hours.
- Person loitering around schools, parks, secluded area, or in a neighborhood.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- One or more juveniles walking casually through the neighborhood looking into vehicles.
- Open or broken doors and windows at a closed business or unoccupied residence.
- Person who appears under the influence of drugs or alcohol or may need medical assistance.
- Sound of breaking glass.
- Frequent visitors to a residence at all times of the day and night.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- Any person taking a shortcut through a backyard.
- Any vehicle moving slowly, without lights or following a course that appears aimless or repetitive in any location.
- Parked vehicles containing one or more persons that has not moved for some time.
- Apparent transaction conducted from a vehicle.
- Person being forced into a vehicle.
- Flashlight beam in neighbors home or yard.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- Person wearing bloody clothing.
- Person making a quick change of vehicles.
- Person taking cover when police vehicle arrives in the area.
- Gypsy activity: people going home to home in an effort to gain entry into any residence by distracting the resident.
- There are numerous other examples. Remember if it seems suspicious to you, it would be best to call 911 and let the police investigate further.

KNOWING WHAT TO REPORT

- Suspicious activities.
- Illegal activities.
- Unusual events or incidents.
- Dangerous situations.

CALLING 911

- Calling 911 is an essential element for police response to emergencies.
- It is important that all citizens understand when to call and when not to call 911.

WHEN TO CALL 911

- For emergency response of police, fire, EMS.
- When anyone is in danger.
- When crimes of violence have occurred or are in progress.
- When someone is in need of immediate help.

WHEN “NOT” TO CALL 911

- Power is off.
- Asking for directions.
- Asking for specific telephone numbers.
- Requesting to speak with a particular officer.
- Asking about weather conditions.
- Asking about community activities and locations.
- Inquiring about past investigations.
- Incidents where an immediate police response is “not” needed.

REPORTING WHAT YOU OBSERVE

- The quickest way for citizens to report anything would be to call the Columbia County Communications Center. Call 911 for an emergency or for non-emergency situations call (570) 784-6300. This will ensure a police officer response.
- The Borough of Berwick Police Department has police clerks available Monday through Friday from 8am until 8pm. Citizens can call anonymously if they wish. The number at police headquarters is: (570) 752-3677. Please remember that you should not call police headquarters if you require a police officer respond to your call. Police clerks do not dispatch call for service. Only the 911 Center dispatches call for service.

REPORTING WHAT YOU OBSERVE

- Citizens can utilize the tips@berwick-pa.com email for anonymously reporting narcotics tips.
- Members of the “Berwick Area Community Watch Group” can utilize the bcwg@berwick-pa.com email to report suspicious activity.
- Citizens can complete the “Berwick Area Community Watch Group” Observation Report.
- The “Observation Report” can be mailed to police headquarters at 1800 North Market Street Berwick, PA 18603 or turned into police clerks during normal business hours, Monday through Friday from 8am until 8pm.

REPORTING A CRIME IN PROGRESS

- Withdraw to a safe distance, stay calm and call 911 immediately.
- Report all activities at the scene. Relay what is happening, where it is happening, who is involved, if anyone is injured or if anyone has fled the scene.
- Describe involved persons: height, weight, race, clothing and if they have a weapon.
- Describe involved vehicles: make, model, color and license plate.

REMEMBER

- Community members only serve as the extra “eyes and ears” of law enforcement. They should report their observations of suspicious activities to law enforcement; however, citizens should not try to take action on those observations. Trained law enforcement should take action based on observations of suspicious activities.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE OFFICER

- Sergeant Michael A. Monico Jr. is the “Community Resource Officer” for the Borough of Berwick Police Department.
- Questions regarding the “Berwick Area Community Watch Group” can be forwarded to Sergeant Monico’s email: monico@berwick-pa.com.

THANK YOU

