

WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM?



The city of Moreno Valley needs its citizens!! We've all seen the Neighborhood Watch signs near the entrances to our neighborhoods; but do you really know what they mean?

Wikipedia defines neighborhood watch as; "an organized group of citizens devoted to crime and vandalism prevention within a neighborhood."

In other words, neighborhood watch is a crime prevention tool consisting of a group of citizens in a certain area (residential, apartment complex, business to name a few) who get together and organize to prevent crime in their area; typically by patrolling, reporting crimes, or by being able to maintain a contact list of neighbors in the event of a natural disaster. A local group is usually headed up by a block captain who is the point of contact for the members of the group. Above that is typically an area coordinator who manages the block captains for a city or large area and acts as a liaison to the Moreno Valley Police Department.

The job of neighborhood watch volunteers on patrol is to simply observe and report. Members are encouraged not to stop and question nor attempt to apprehend suspects. The police department will respond to contact suspects and make arrests if warranted. Patrolling is a very effective method of preventing crime just by being visible. Criminals want an easy target for their crimes and a neighborhood where people are actively watching the area is not an easy target.

If you are interested in learning about proven crime prevention strategies and forming a Neighborhood Watch in your area, please contact the Moreno Valley Police Department – Community Services Unit at 951-486-6717.