



**City of Gainesville**  
**Neighborhood Watch Program**  
701 Queen City Pkwy. SW  
Gainesville, GA. 30501

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for your interest in the Neighborhood Watch Program. We have included our “Getting Started” packet to help you start your own Neighborhood Watch group. A member of our Community Relations Unit will coordinate the City’s program in your Police District. Please give us a call to answer your questions and to set up your first neighborhood watch meeting.

Sincerely,

Cpl. Joseph Britte, Jr.  
(770) 287-0893  
e-mail: [jbritte@gainesville.org](mailto:jbritte@gainesville.org)

Cpl. Kevin Holbrook  
(770) 287-0893  
e-mail: [kholbrook@gainesville.org](mailto:kholbrook@gainesville.org)

***Gainesville Police Department***



***Nixle Agency Login:*** <http://local.nixle.com/gainesville-georgia-police-department/>





## What is a Neighborhood Watch?

Neighborhood Watch is:

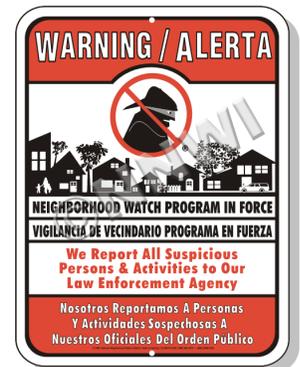
1. Citizens and police working in a partnership to reduce crimes and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods.
2. A cohesive body of concerned citizens addressing issues that concern the entire community.
3. Neighbors getting to know each other, taking the time to care about each other and working together in a program of mutual assistance.

A comprehensive Neighborhood Watch Program in your neighborhood, whether it is a high crime area or not, will have many rewards to you, your family and your neighbors.

Neighborhood Watch programs are known to instill a greater sense of security, well-being and reduce the fear of crime in your community, as well as create a greater “sense of community,” by putting the “neighbor” back into neighborhood.

The residents that live in an area will know the needs of that area better than anyone else. By communicating with each other and working together as a team, your community can make a difference.

Contact **Cpl. Joseph Britte, Jr.** or **Cpl. Kevin Holbrook** at (770) 287-0893 or e-mail [jbritte@gainesville.org](mailto:jbritte@gainesville.org) or [kholbrook@gainesville.org](mailto:kholbrook@gainesville.org) for more information and to set up your first meeting.



# Organizing a Neighborhood Watch Group

## The ABCs of Neighborhood Watch

- Any community resident can join – young, old, single, married, renter and home owner. A few concerned residents or a community organization can spearhead the effort to organize a Watch Group.
- Members learn how to make their homes more secure, watch out for each other and the neighborhood, and report activities that raise their suspicions to the police.
- You can form a Watch group around any geographical unit: a block, apartment, park, business area, public housing complex, office, etc.
- Watch groups are not vigilantes. They are extra eyes and ears for reporting crime and helping neighbors. Neighborhood Watch helps build pride and serves as a springboard for efforts that address community concerns such as recreation for youth, child care, and affordable housing.

## Getting Organized. Below are some important tips to get your group started.

- Contact the Neighborhood Safety Coordinators at (770) 287-0893 or e-mail [jbritte@gainesville.org](mailto:jbritte@gainesville.org) or [kholbrook@gainesville.org](mailto:kholbrook@gainesville.org) for help in training members in home security, reporting skills and for information on local crime patterns. Please coordinate your first meeting so that a City of Gainesville Police Department Neighborhood Safety Coordinator can attend.
- Plan your first meeting for a weeknight at someone's home, yard, recreation center, local park, school or church. Don't plan to have other speakers or activities. Think of this as a business meeting. Meetings take approximately one hour.
- Select a coordinator and block captains who are responsible for organizing meetings and relaying information to members.
- Recruit members, keeping up-to-date on new residents and making special efforts to involve the elderly, working parents, and young people. See sample flyer attached.
- Work with your Neighborhood Safety Coordinator to put up Neighborhood Watch signs after at least 50 percent of all households are enrolled. Signs can cost in the range of \$70-\$80 dollars each at a sign company of your choice. Installation is **FREE of CHARGE and signs will be installed by Public Works/Street Department**. See sign program description later in this packet.
- Plan “get-togethers” during the year to maintain neighborhood relationships. After your first year as an active Neighborhood Watch group, you must meet on an annual basis, submitting a sign-in sheet to the Neighborhood Safety Coordinator in order to be considered an active group.
- Annual block parties are a fun activity for the neighborhood once the group has been formed. Getting involved in “National Night Out” (NNO) is a great event to consider for the annual get-together during the month of August.

# 10 Steps to Starting a Neighborhood Watch

- Step One: **Define your neighborhood** geographically. Start small – 30 to 35 homes - so you and your neighbors can get to know everyone.
- Step Two: **Talk to your neighbors.** Do they know that a Neighborhood Watch program can be fun? What are their issues? What nights are they available for a meeting?
- Step Three: **Call the Gainesville Police Department's** Crime Prevention/Community Relations Officers (770) 287-0893 or e-mail [jbritte@gainesville.org](mailto:jbritte@gainesville.org) or [kholbrook@gainesville.org](mailto:kholbrook@gainesville.org) and schedule a mutually agreeable date/time for the first meeting. Tell the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator about any issues or concerns that may be brought up at the meeting.
- Step Four: **Ask neighbors** to be Co-Captains (one neighbor per 10-15 homes).
- Step Five: **Start a committee** with interested neighbors to plan the first meeting. Assign someone to: market/advertise the meeting, make/buy food, meeting logistics (name tags, copy of sign-in sheet, pens). Focus on the “3 F’s” which are Food, Fun and Free things.
- Step Six: **Advertise the meeting** to your neighbors! Invite **ALL** your neighbors (in your geographical area) and all who would be familiar with your neighborhood such as postman, delivery person and trash pick-up person. Talk to everyone when you get the opportunity. Deliver flyers to each home. Involve the children of your community by asking them to help by delivering the flyers.
- Step Seven: **Call to confirm** with your Neighborhood Safety Coordinator representative 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Step Eight: **Set up a welcome table** before the meeting begins with the sign-in sheet, name tags, and any applicable material provided by the Gainesville Police Department.
- Step Nine: **Introduce the Neighborhood Safety Coordinator** that will present on Neighborhood Watch. The presentation will last approximately 45 minutes followed by 15 minutes of questions and answers. After the meeting, schedule a follow-up meeting with your group (a City of Gainesville PD representative does not have to attend the second and subsequent meetings). Thank everyone who attended and acknowledge those who helped or neighborhood businesses that donated items. Invite neighbors to remain and get to know each other.
- Step Ten: **Thank those who helped** after the meeting and get their help to work on the next meeting.



## CITY OF GAINESVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH CAPTAIN INFORMATION SHEET

Please complete this form and fax or mail it to the Neighborhood Safety Coordinator, City of Gainesville Police Department (Attn. Cpl. Joseph Britte and Cpl. Kevin Holbrook), 701 Queen City Pkwy., Gainesville, GA 30501 or fax to (770) 535-5620. **PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS!**

Please check one (use a pen please):  Captain       Co-Captain

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Homes in your NHW\* area

\_\_\_\_\_  
Number of homes participating in NHW\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Captain or Co-Captain's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*NHW - Neighborhood Watch

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### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date entered into Database \_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTICE OF CHANGE**  
**City of Gainesville**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH CAPTAIN INFORMATION SHEET**

This form must be completed by the **new** Neighborhood Watch Captain and mailed/faxed to the Community Relations Officers, Gainesville Police Department, 701 Queen City Pkwy, Gainesville, GA. 30501 or fax to (770) 535-5620

**Previous** Captain's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Captain's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Captain's City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Captain's Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Captain's Boundaries (include a map): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**New** Captain's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

New Captain's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

New Captain's City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New Captain's Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

New Captain's Boundaries: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Captain's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date New Captain Started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date entered into Database \_\_\_\_\_

# Neighborhood Watch

## Creative Ways To Increase Attendance

- Go door to door introducing yourself and your reason for setting up the Neighborhood Watch program and write down their names and telephone numbers for a follow up phone call before the scheduled meeting
- Be sure to always call the “potential attendees” a few days prior to the meeting to ensure their participation
- Food is the #1 attraction for people to attend
- Send out and/or post flyers in addition to word of mouth
- Contact local TV/Radio stations to use your meeting or block party for a live remote for weather.
- Have raffles and door prizes, solicit donations from stores in your neighborhood.**(Optional)**
- Have a local celebrity (the Mayor, council person, sports person and etc.) make an appearance at your NHW meeting.
- Get subject specialists from the Police Department or some other city/county/state subject specialist.
- Discuss things of interest to the neighbors at your meetings.
- Ask neighbors what has happened to them in the past year. Go to the library to get crime stats for your neighborhood.
- Use an agenda for each meeting and limit to 1 hour or 1 and 1/2 hours **-MAX!**
- Involve co-captains. Let them run some meetings.
- Rotate your Captains so no one burns out.
- Develop and use a newsletter or e-mail address list to communicate.

## **City of Gainesville Departments/ Programs to Help Your NHW Group**

1. Code Enforcement/ City Marshal – (770) 531-6570
2. Graffiti Hotline – (770) 534-1700
3. Gainesville Fire Department (Public Education) – (770) 534-3612
4. Gainesville Police Department (Non-Emergency) – (770) 534-5252 or (770) 536-8812
5. Hall County 911 – (770) 534-5251
6. Gainesville PD Crime Prevention/Community Relations Officers – (770) 287-0893
7. Gainesville Police Citizens' Academy – (770) 534-5252 ext.3373
8. Gainesville Police Business Academy – (770) 287-0893
9. Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Council Victim's Assistance – (404) 657-2222
10. Gang Task Force – (770) 297-2291
11. Housing Enforcement – (770) 535-6861
12. Hall County Public Library – (770) 532-3311
13. City of Gainesville Public Works/Traffic Engineering – (770) 535-6882
14. Solid Waste – (770) 532-0493
15. Police Traffic Services Unit Speed Awareness Information – (770) 534-5252 ext.2685
16. The Mayor's Office – (770) 535-6865
17. Hall County Court House – (770) 531-6912
18. United Way Community Information Hotline - 211
19. Parks and Recreation Facility booking – (770) 531-2680
20. Department of Family and Children Services – (770) 532-5298
21. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – (770) 535-5700
22. Hall County Marshalls Office – (770) 531-6762
23. Hall County Animal Control – (770) 531-6830

# **Gainesville Police Department** **Directory**

- **Major/Interim Chief**  
Carol Martin  
Office (770) 535-5625
- **Operations Bureau**  
Captain John Robertson  
Office (770) 535-3774
- **Support Services Bureau Captain**  
Captain Jay Parrish  
Office (770) 538-2442
- **Specialized Services Division**  
**Police Traffic Services Unit**  
Lieutenant Shawn Welsh: (770) 535-5626  
Sergeant Dean Staples: (770) 535-5166  
**PACE/ ACE/Park Ranger/K-9 Unit**  
Sergeant Dallas Bright: (678) 450-5054
- **Criminal Investigations Division**  
Lieutenant Mike Martin: (678) 989-3373  
Sergeant Johnny Ray: (770) 535-6894

**FOR NON- EMERGENCY CALL**  
**(770) 534-5251**



# Hello Neighbor, GOT A MINUTE?

I know you care about our neighborhood as I do, and I am inviting you to a meeting to talk about forming a Neighborhood Watch Program. It is to be held at:

\_\_\_\_\_

on: \_\_\_\_\_

at: \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.

The Gainesville Police Department's Neighborhood Watch Program, Coordinator, will be there to talk about forming a Neighborhood Watch program. We will discuss inexpensive ways to improve home security and how to combine our efforts to make our neighborhood a safer place in which to live.

Please plan to attend. If you have any questions call me for more details about this meeting:

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Meeting:  Yes  No

Captain's Name & Address - including Zip & email (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

# Neighborhood Watch Meeting Sign-In Sheet

**FAX to:** (770) 535-5620 or **MAIL to** Gainesville Police Department, 701 Queen City Pkwy, Gainesville, GA. 30501. Attention: Cpl. Joseph Britte, Jr. and Cpl. Kevin Holbrook  
**PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS!**

*Please PRINT your name below (print clearly). One person per household.*

Name	Address	Home Phone	E-mail
1.			
2.			
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5.			
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20.			

## **How do we obtain a Neighborhood Watch Sign?**

The signs range from \$70-\$80 dollars per sign at a sign company of your choice, however, the installation is **FREE of CHARGE!** Once you complete your second Neighborhood Watch meeting or activity, complete the sign request form and return it with a copy of the first and second meeting sign-in sheet and a map giving specific locations of installation. **Please drop off signs at the Gainesville Justice Center (Police Dept. Attn. Corporals Britte and Holbrook) located on 701 Queen City Pkwy.** Your sign will be installed in 2 to 4 weeks. We suggest that a community collection is taken during your second meeting. This collection will also instill a sense of ownership within the community in the program.

Installation of the signs will be arranged by the Neighborhood Safety Coordinator and Gainesville Public Works/Traffic Engineering Department and placed in a location appropriate for signage and with your community's approval.

Here are the guidelines established by the Public Works/Traffic Engineering Department regarding the sign placement:

- 1) Signs will be typically posted on the back of an existing stop sign. If no stop sign is present or there is a visibility issue, the sign will be installed on its own pole adjacent to a property.
- 2) If the sign is posted adjacent to a property it will typically be located on the property line. Prior to the submittal of the "neighborhood watch sign request" form, the neighborhood watch captain needs to make sure that the owner of the property is aware of the sign placement and agrees to the installation of the sign avoiding potential complaints and moving it after its installation.
- 3) The signs will be placed at each entrance of the residential area coming from a major road, signs will not be installed throughout the neighborhood.
- 4) Signs will NOT be installed on PRIVATE STREETS or gated neighborhoods. The city will install signs on public streets only. However if approved by your Home Owners Association you may make arrangements to install your signs on private streets and/or gated communities.

The Neighborhood Safety Coordinator should be called at (770) 287-0893 to request any sign maintenance. No fees to maintain your neighborhood signage will be assessed by the City of Gainesville for this service unless sign needs to be replaced then NHW community will be responsible for replacing the sign.

## **How do I renew our signage privileges?**

Signage **MUST** be renewed for your Neighborhood Watch Community on an annual basis. This renewal process can be done easily by having at least one meeting or event per calendar year. Please fax your sign-in sheets or mail them to the Neighborhood Safety Coordinator at (770) 535-5620 as verification of the meeting and those attending. After meeting these requirements, your signage will automatically be renewed. **NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUPS THAT DO NOT HOLD AN ANNUAL EVENT/MEETING AND RENEW THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH SIGNAGE ARE CONSIDERED INACTIVE BY THE GAINESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH SIGN REQUEST**

Please return the completed form with a map of sign location and copies of your two meeting sign in sheets. **Sign dimensions are: 18 in. x 24 in., Reflective, 80,000 "Aluminum" Thickness Sheet Metal and 1.5 on all Four Corners.** Fax: (770) 535-5620 or by mail:

Gainesville Police Department  
 Community Relations Unit  
 701 Queen City Pkwy  
 Gainesville, GA. 30501



Neighborhood Watch Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of signs requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the CROSS STREETS for **EACH** sign that you are requesting:

Sign	Cross Street	&	Cross Street
1.	_____	&	_____
	_____		_____
2.	_____	&	_____
	_____		_____
3.	_____	&	_____
	_____		_____
4.	_____	&	_____
	_____		_____
5.	_____	&	_____
	_____		_____

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

DATE RECEIVED BY NHW: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE SENT TO TR. ENG: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE REC'VD BY TR. ENG. \_\_\_\_\_ DATE INSTALLED: \_\_\_\_\_ BY: \_\_\_\_\_

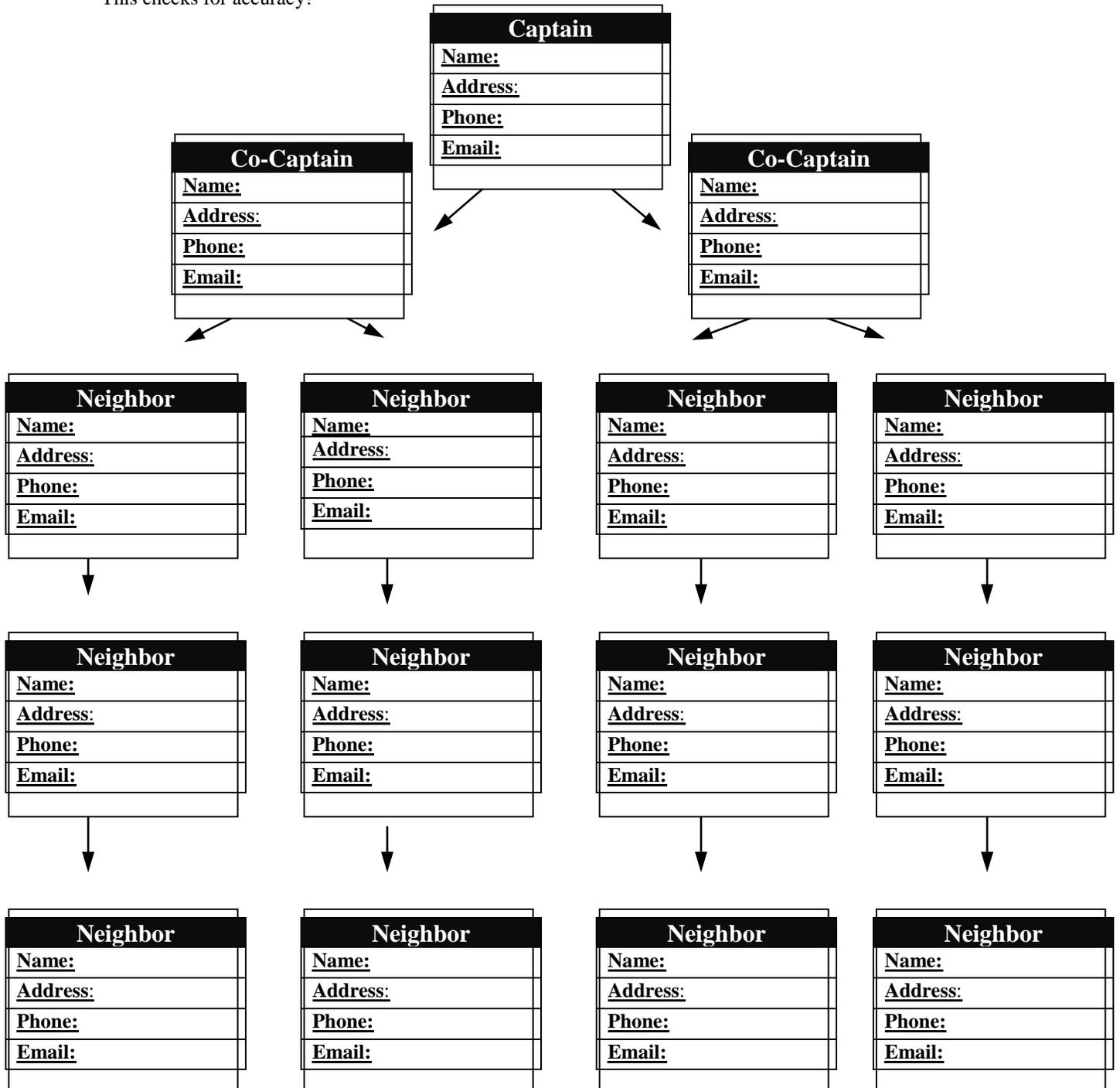


# Communication Tree

## Neighborhood Watch Calling Guide

Call the Gainesville Police first (**either 9-1-1 or non emergency (770) 534-5251**), then call the Neighborhood Watch Captain. Remember:

- If you call the next person on the tree and you get no answer or an answering machine, keep the tree going by calling the next level!
- When you get to the bottom of the tree, the person on the bottom must call the Captain to tell them the message. This checks for accuracy!



## Operation Identification

Being caught in the act is a thief's greatest risk and their second highest risk is being caught "red handed" with the incriminating evidence, the property they have stolen. With modern mass produced appliances and products looking identical, the police have no way of identifying recovered property as stolen goods unless the serial number is available or the item has been engraved with a property owner's unique number. Every year, law enforcement agencies across the country auction millions of dollars worth of recovered, lost or stolen property because of the lack of identification. If an item has been engraved, however, the information can be entered into state and national law enforcement computer networks to trace these goods in any matter of seconds and the owner can be identified. This knowledge alone may act as a major deterrent to a potential thief since items that can be traced back to their original owners bring a lower price on the street, making the thief's efforts less rewarding. Operation Identification is a crime prevention program where electric engraving pencils can be purchased by the organization or loaned by the Gainesville Police Department to the organization, so that they may engrave an identifying number on selected valuables for identification purposes in case the property is stolen. The program is designed to discourage the theft of valuables. Participating in this program will lessen the likelihood of the property being stolen, but in the event of this happening, the chances of the property being recovered by the police and returned to the owner, will increase.

### History of Marking One's Property

Throughout history people have always wanted to "mark" the things that they have owned. Symbols, signet, marks, and monograms exist to this day, delineating a person's ownership of a piece of property.

The "branding" of cattle existed long before the American West existed. This marking of one's cattle resulted in severe punishment for those unauthorized people found in possession of these branded cattle without documented proof of ownership.

### Modern-Day Operation Identification

In 1963, Everett F. Holladay initiated the first recognized operation identification program in the United States. In response to a series of hubcap thefts, chief Holladay instructed the residents of Monterey Park, California to engrave their automobile license numbers on all hubcaps. They designed this project to deter thefts and aid in the prosecution of the perpetrators. Chief Holladay later expanded the program to homeowners by providing them with electric engravers, issuing them warning stickers to be displayed on their homes and business and registering the inventory of marked property with the police.



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## Starting an Operation Identification Program

- The person responsible for the program should be a NHW Block Captain or your local law enforcement agency crime prevention officer.
- An analysis should be conducted to determine which crimes Operation Identification will impact in your jurisdiction. Burglary and theft are usually the two primary offenses affected. The type and frequency of items taken should be considered.
- The recommended number to be engraved onto the property must be determined by the owner of the property. The number must be one that can easily be obtained by the property owner, be permanently traceable back to the property owner and should be acceptable for entry into the FBI's National Crime Information Center computer system for stolen property. Many programs use the driver's license number of the property owner with the two letter abbreviation for the state listed either before or after this number. **EXAMPLE: GA##### 09 (year of expiration)**
- The logo or visual identification for the program should be created. Brochures explaining the program, posters for marketing it, inventory forms and small and large decals should be designed and printed.
- Inventory controls for the engravers, decals and printed material should be developed.
- An advertising campaign should be developed to attract participants. Neighborhood organizations, clubs and schools should be informed of the new program and how it can help them prevent the loss of their property.
- The program should be started with the material distributed and engravers loaned out. The Gainesville Police Department currently has engraving pens but must be "checked out" from the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator and returned in a timely fashion. Whatever method is employed, an adequate inventory must be maintained of the equipment to insure its return and subsequent reuse.
- All items should be engraved that might be attractive to a thief.
- The property should be engraved in a prominent place where the marking will be both readily visible and difficult to cover or remove without the attempt being obvious.
- Televisions, stereos, VCRs, radios and other electronic equipment can be prominently marked on the back of the chassis or case.
- Engines and body parts of power driven equipment such as riding mowers and snowmobiles are sometimes exchanged to reduce the risk of identification. Mark both the engine and frame.
- Clothing and furs can be marked with invisible or indelible ink, or the number can be embroidered on the material.
- An additional marking should be made in an inconspicuous area on the property.

- Each engraved item should have a small decal affixed to it showing it is engraved.
- Property that cannot be engraved, such as antiques, jewelry, coins, silver, china, etc. should be photographed in detail.
  
- The property owner should maintain an inventory of engraved items, including a description of the property, the model number, the serial number, color, cost and the location of Operation Identification markings. The inventory list should be kept in a safe place.
  
- When the engraver is returned warning stickers that are shown above are developed by the sign company and purchased by the property owner/NHW group are placed on every window and door of the protected property. The Operation Identification stickers on windows and doors inform a potential burglar that you are determined to protect your belongings. If the homeowner has taken the time to mark their valuable, a burglar can assume that they have also taken other security measures as well. To the burglar, this translates into increased risk and they move onto another target.

## **Will Operation Identification Really Deter a Thief?**

Some people have questioned the effectiveness of Operation Identification program. Others believe that if a thief knows the property in a home is clearly marked the thief is unlikely to select that home as a target. Further, it is believed that marked property has a reduced resale value to the “fence” making an Operation Identification participant’s property less attractive. Another very valuable benefit of Operation in identification is the recording of property descriptions and serial numbers at the time of engraving.

This information is very vital in order to enter the stolen item into the NCIC computer system and to aid in identification in case of recovery. Finally another advantage of Operation Identification is that it sensitizes those persons who participate in it to good security practices and measures. The individual who participates in this program will usually be the same person who practices other good crime prevention habits such as being careful with keys, locking doors and windows, securing property, etc.

## **Mark These Possessions**

**The items listed below are those most commonly stolen from homes, cars, and businesses:**

*Answering machines*  
*Bicycles*  
*Binoculars*  
*Camcorders*  
*Cameras*  
*Car audio systems*  
*Computer equipment*  
*DVD players*  
*Fishing rods, reels*  
*Guns*  
*Kitchen appliances*  
*Lawn mowers*  
*Mag wheels*  
*Microwaves*

*MP3 Players*  
*Musical Instruments*  
*Outboard Motors*  
*Radios*  
*Stereo Equipment*  
*Tape Recorders*  
*Telephones*  
*Tools (hand/power)*  
*Televisions*  
*Vacuum Cleaners*  
*Wheel Covers*  
*Lap Top Computers*  
*iPods*  
***ANYTHING OF GREAT MONETARY VALUE!***



## Gainesville Police Department Valuable Property Record

ITEM	Manufacture's Name, Model and Serial Number	Where Item is Marked	Operation ID Number
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# **Gainesville Police Department**

## **Motor Vehicle Theft Fact Sheet**

The Gainesville Police Departments Community Relations Unit is a proactive component of the department and would like to share with the community some important safety tips about Motor Vehicle Theft prevention. Motor vehicle theft is a serious problem in many parts of the world. In the United States, the annual loss from car theft is over \$4 billion. The Automotive Information Council reports that over one million motor vehicles are stolen in the U.S. each year. That's one motor vehicle theft every 31 seconds. Please use these safety tips in your daily routine to protect you and your vehicle:

- 1) Lock it and pocket the keys. Nearly 20% of all vehicles stolen had the keys in them. Remember to lock the trunk, the hatchback or the tailgate of a station wagon or sport utility vehicle (SUV)
- 2) If your motor vehicle is an older model, replace standard door lock buttons with tapered ones. These replacements are inexpensive and much more difficult to pry up.
- 3) Don't leave motor vehicle registration, insurance policies, credit cards or other important papers in a vehicle's glove compartment.
- 4) If you use a self-service gasoline stations or convenience stores, don't leave the key in the vehicle when you go inside to pay your bill.
- 5) Don't place a mini-replica of a license plate or personal identification on a vehicle's key ring.
- 6) Never hide a second set of keys in the vehicle. Extra keys can easily be found if the thief takes time to look. Store a spare key in your wallet.
- 7) If possible, avoid parking next to vans, pick-ups, and other large vehicles. These large vehicles can "hide" your vehicle and make it more difficult for others to observe.
- 8) When parking along a curb, angle the front wheels sharply to the left or right, making it difficult for the thief to tow it away. Wheels should also be turned to the side in driveways and parking lots.
- 9) If your vehicle is rear-wheel drive, back into your driveway. Rear wheels lock on four-wheel drive vehicles, making them difficult to tow. Front-wheel drive vehicles should be parked front end first.
- 10) Periodically check your license plates to make sure they haven't been stolen, switched or altered.
- 11) Don't invite a vehicle break-in by leaving packages or valuables (radar detectors, cellular phones, compact disc players, etc.) in sight. Take valuables with you, put them under the seat or lock them in the trunk.
- 12) Whenever possible, park in well lighted and busy areas.
- 13) Whenever possible, park in an attended lot. Motor vehicle thieves do not like witnesses and prefer unattended parking lots.
- 14) When you park in an attended lot, leave only the ignition/door key. If your trunk and glove box use the same key as the door, have one of them changed. Leaving the ignition key with the attendant, retain all others and be sure the key number does not appear on the key that is left.
- 15) On cold mornings, never leave your motor vehicle running while it is unattended, in order to warm up.

**16)** For each vehicle you own or lease, record the following information and keep it in a safe location (not in the vehicle):

- Make and Model
- Model Year
- Registration Number (Plate)
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)
- Color
- Name of Insurance Company and Agent
- Engine Size
- Any Peculiarities of Vehicle (dents, pin stripes, etc.)
- Key Number

**17)** Avoid transferring items to the trunk of a vehicle where it is to be parked. A thief may be watching. Checkbooks, credit cards or other credentials which a thief could misuse should not be left in a motor vehicle.

**18)** Park as close as possible to an open business.

**19)** If you have a garage, use it. Lock your garage door. Also lock your vehicle doors, even when it's in the garage.

**20)** When going out of town and leaving your motor vehicle, if possible, remove the electronic ignition fuse, rotor distributor or the coil wire.

**21)** If you see a disabled motor vehicle, don't stop. Instead, drive to a nearby telephone and inform the police of the vehicle's location.

**22)** If your vehicle becomes disabled, attach a white handkerchief to the door handle or window, lock the doors and stay inside the vehicle. If someone stops to help, do not open your door or window. Ask the person to please go to a telephone and call for help.

**23)** Possibly use cane type steering wheel locks. The metal cane hooks around the brake pedal on one end, and around the steering wheel rim or spoke on the other. The device is drawn tight and locked with a key.

**24)** Don't disconnect the buzzer that warns of keys left in the ignition. It's for your protection.

**25)** Possibly use a locking gas cap, not only to prevent theft of gasoline, but to limit a thief to the amount of driving he can do on one tank.

# **Vacation Crime Prevention Tips**

Vacation is a time for relaxation and enjoyment. It can also be the time for crime victimization if appropriate crime prevention measures are not followed. The following crime prevention tips or recommendations are designed to allow the vacationer to enjoy a safe and secure trip and to return to a secure residence.

## **Before Leaving . . . . Secure Your Residence**

- Have good locks on all doors and windows and use them.
- Make sure your residence looks lived in, not empty.
- Leave shades and blinds in a normal position.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your residence while you are away. Leave your vacation address and telephone number with a neighbor so you can be reached in case of an emergency.
- Test your smoke and burglar alarms.
- Stop all deliveries, Fill out Post Office Mail Stop Card, arrange for a neighbor to pick up your mail, newspaper and packages.
- Arrange for someone to mow your lawn, rake leaves and maintain the yard to give the home a lived-in look.
- Have a neighbor place garbage cans at the curb on your normal pickup day(s) and return them after the garbage pickup is made.
- Plug in timers to turn lights and a radio or television on and off at appropriate times.
- Turn the bell or ringer on your telephone down low. If a burglar is around, he won't be alerted to your absence by a ringing telephone.
- If you have call forwarding on your telephone, forward your calls to a trusted friend or relative.
- Don't announce your absence on answering machine messages; leave your normal message on the machine.
- Engrave your valuables with your driver's license number and post Operation Identification decals on entry doors and windows.
- Close and lock garage doors and windows. Ask a neighbor to occasionally park in your driveway. If you leave your car at home, park it as you normally would. Vehicles parked outside should be moved occasionally to appear that they are being used.
- Consider taking valuables to a bank safety deposit box.

- Ask local police to place your home on their vacation check list.

***CALL HALL COUNTY CENTRAL DISPATCH AT (770) 534-5251 FOR THIS SERVICE!***

## **Cash**

- Do not carry large amounts of cash. If you must carry cash, never display large amounts.
- When possible, carry cash substitutes such as traveler's checks or credit cards. Keep a written record of your traveler's checks and credit card numbers, and keep them in a safe place.

## **Luggage**

- Remove old flight tags from your luggage. Old flight tags can cause confusion and misdirect your luggage.
- Provide adequate identification on the outside and inside of your luggage.
- Never leave your luggage unattended, even for a short period of time.
- Never store cash, jewelry, medicine or other valuables in your luggage.

## **On The Road**

- Never carry large amounts of cash; use travelers checks. If you must carry large sums of money, do not display it openly.
- Keep a record of traveler's check numbers and your credit card numbers in a safe place. Have the telephone numbers to call in case your checks or credit cards are stolen or lost.
- Be aware of your surroundings and never advertise your plans to strangers; this includes travel routes and the amount of cash you are carrying.
- Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist. Go to the nearest telephone and call for assistance.
- If you suspect someone is following you, drive to the nearest service station, restaurant or business and call the police or sheriff's department. If you believe it is unsafe for you to get out of your car, sound your horn and flash your lights to draw attention.
- If your car breaks down, raise the hood and attach a white flag to the antenna or door handle. If someone stops to help it is advisable that you stay in your locked car and ask them to call the police or a garage. If you must abandon you car, keep all passengers together.
- Do not carry your airplane tickets or passport in open view.
- Be very careful with bus, train or airplane tickets. They are as good as cash.

- Males are advised to carry their wallets in an inside pocket or front trouser pocket.
- Females are advised to carry their purse under their arm.
- Take a picture of your suitcases and keep the picture(s) with you. The picture(s) may be helpful in identifying your luggage if it is lost by an airline.
- While traveling, be sure your luggage is locked.
- Label each piece of luggage with your name and business address.

## **Car Security**

- Always lock your car after entering or leaving it.
- Park in well-lighted areas.
- Check the back seat before entering your car.
- Mark your car radio and other removable car equipment with your driver's license number.
- Always lock valuables out of sight, preferably in the trunk. Always carry wallet, checkbooks and purses with you.
- Do not advertise that you are a tourist. Place maps and travel brochures in your vehicle's glove compartment.

## **Hotel and Motel Security**

- If you are staying in a hotel or motel, take all of your luggage and valuables to your room.
- Never leave money, checks, credit cards, car keys or valuables in the room. Take them with you.
- Determine the most direct route to and from your room, to the fire escapes, elevators and nearest telephone.
- When occupying or leaving your room, use all auxiliary locking devices on doors and windows. (You may want to purchase a portable door lock for traveling.)
- Keep a daily check of your belongings.
- Place extra cash, expensive jewelry or other valuables in the hotel/motel safe.
- Use the door viewer to identify anyone requesting entry. Open the door only if you are certain the person has a legitimate reason to enter your room. If in doubt, call the hotel/motel office.

- Unpack and place belongings in the closet and dresser. Arrange your things so you'll know if anything is missing.
- Consider locking any electrical appliances (blow dryers, electric shavers, etc.) in your luggage. Suitcases should always be locked so they cannot be used to carry your property out of your room.
- Report any lost or stolen items to the hotel/motel management and to the police.
- Report to the management any suspicious movements in the corridors or rooms.

### **Sight-Seeing**

- Make note of your passport number. If it becomes lost or stolen, knowing your passport number will facilitate getting a new passport.
- Ask for directions at a hotel/motel on how to get to those attractions you want to visit.
- If you are going out in an unfamiliar area, ask the hotel clerk if there are areas you should avoid.
- Select tour guides carefully.
- Don't advertise you are a tourist. Don't look lost or vulnerable. Walk with a purpose and stay alert to what's happening around you. If you get lost, find an open business and ask for directions.
- Only carry with you the cash you will need, and only in small denominations.
- If older children go off separately, be sure they understand the importance of keeping track of time and returning promptly at appointed hours.

### **Camping Tips**

- Avoid camping alone in isolated areas.
- Park your vehicle so it cannot be blocked by another vehicle in case of an emergency.
- Mark all your belongings and camping equipment with your driver's license number and keep a record of equipment.
- Mark your tent, sleeping bags and clothing with indelible ink.
- Engrave your foot locker, thermos, coolers, lamps and flashlights, fishing gear, backpacks, barbecue grills, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with local emergency locations and phone numbers in case of accidents or crimes.
- Avoid leaving your camping gear (cook stove, ice chest, chairs, etc.) out in the open unattended.

- Get to know your neighbors and help protect each other's belongings
- .
- Avoid walking alone at night.
- Carry a spare lock so you can use storage containers which may be available at many parks.
- Use a chain and lock to secure propane tanks, portable generators, spare tires, bicycles, etc.
- Always lock your camping trailer when you leave the vicinity.
- Install a locking device on the trailer towing hitch, so your trailer cannot be towed away.
- Report any suspicious activities and all crimes to the proper authorities.

# **Travel Crime Prevention Tips**

A security-wise traveler needs to learn how to travel safely. This awareness begins with a realization that the traveler must take reasonable precautions to protect him or herself, their family and personal property. The following are a series of crime prevention tips or recommendations that should be embraced and adopted by travelers.

## **Parking at a Hotel**

- Park your car in a well-lit area close to the lobby or use valet parking.
- Do not park in a space with your room number on it, if possible.
- Before getting out of your vehicle, check your surroundings for suspicious-looking people.
- When you get out, lock your vehicle. Do not leave valuables in the vehicle or in the trunk.
- Walk confidently and briskly from your vehicle to your destination.
- Be aware of loiterers when moving valuables from your vehicle to your room.
- Memorize your vehicle's license number so you will not have to go outside to get it when registering.

## **Checking In**

- Always make reservations ahead of time and secure them with a credit card. Otherwise, if desirable facilities are not available, you may become stranded or in an unsafe room.
- If your room is not ready when you attempt to check in (e.g., if you arrive early in the day), ask to store your luggage in a locked room. Many hotels and motels have a "day room" where you can temporarily store your luggage.
- When completing the guest registry, some women prefer to sign their name in a gender neutral fashion using only their first initial and last name, such as M. Johnson.
- Register with your business address rather than your home address.
- Advise the front desk never to release your room number.
- Avoid "shortcuts" such as back stairwells when moving about the lodging.
- Ask the front desk clerk specific questions about the hotel's security features:
- If there are hotel security officers, how can they be reached?

- Does the hotel lock the outside doors at a certain hour?
- If they do, what is the best way to re-enter?

## **Room Location**

- If the hotel has more than one building, request a room in or near the main building.
- Request a room that faces inward toward other rooms or toward the lobby.
- Request a room that does not have easy access to its window, such as from the roof or street.
- Request a room:
  - A)** On the second floor, but no higher than the seventh floor.
  - B)** Near a fire exit.
  - C)** Away from stairwells, elevators, ice machines, vending machines, basements or garbage/ refuse rooms.
  - D)** A room near (but not next to) the elevator helps to avoid long walks down stairways.
  - E)** If you are a woman traveling alone, request the concierge or key service floor, if there is one.

## **When You Arrive at Your Room**

- If a bell person shows you to your room, ask him or her to point out the room's safety features, locks and exits.
- If you are not shown to your room by a bell person, conduct a quick visual check of your room to see if anything appears to be out of place. Leave immediately if it appears like someone may have been in your room.
- Do not let strangers show you to your room or carry your luggage if they are not affiliated with the hotel.
- Do not enter your room if someone appears to be watching you or loitering nearby. Walk confidently by such people, but not into a dead end. Go where there are other people. If that is not possible, enter your room quickly and report your concerns to the front desk.
- Never leave money, checks, credit cards, car keys or valuables in a hotel or motel room. Take them with you.
- Particularly if you are staying in a hotel or motel more than one night, unpack and place belongings in the room closet and dresser. Arrange your belongings so you will know if anything is missing.
- Maintain a daily check of your belongings.
- Lock your empty suitcases so they cannot be used to carry your belongings out of your room.

## **Valuables**

- If you have valuables or important documents (e.g., a passport or airline ticket), store them in the safety deposit box at the front desk and get a receipt.
- Use an in-room safe to store only items of moderate value. Large sums of money and jewelry should be placed in the safe at the front desk.
- If there is not an in-room safe, put valuables in a money belt you wear, or possibly bring a “portable safe” such as hollow books, shoes with hollow heels, suitcases with secret compartments, etc.

## **Elevators**

- When riding on an elevator, always stand next to the elevator controls.
- Do not enter an elevator if it is occupied by anyone you consider to be suspicious.
- If someone is watching when you enter an elevator, press several floor buttons so they will not know which floor you got off on. Notify the front desk if the person made you feel uncomfortable.

## **Door and Window Security**

- Things to look for in hotel or motel door security include:
  - 1) Sturdy locks
  - 2) Reliable key system
  - 3) Visibility to the hallway
  - 4) When occupying or leaving your room, use all auxiliary locking devices on doors and windows. (You may want to purchase a portable door lock for traveling).
  - 5) Windows should open and close easily from the inside.
  - 6) Use the extra lock or stick on windows, sliding or patio doors so they cannot be lifted out of their tracks.
  - 7) If you have a physical disability, request a room where locks are reachable and easy to operate.

## **Telephone Tips**

- Learn how to use the room telephone to summon help quickly in the event of an emergency.
- Learn the number for the front desk.
- Learn how to call 911.
- Memorize your room number and the name of the hotel.
- Read any information printed on the face of the room telephone, if available.

- If you receive unwanted, harassing or threatening telephone calls, hang up immediately and notify the front desk.

## **General Hotel Safety Recommendations**

- Keep your room key in a safe place, such as safety-pinned to the inside of your pocket.
- Request a key that does not have your room number on it.
- Report missing or lost keys immediately and move to a different room.
- Use the door viewer to identify anyone requesting entry. Open the door only if you are certain the person has a legitimate reason to enter your room. If in doubt, call the front desk.
- If you are expecting someone to come to your room, pre-arrange an exact time of arrival, as well as some form of introduction or identification.
- Completely close the room curtains, especially in the evening or if you will be away from the room for some time.
- Do not leave magazines around your room or the pool that have your home address on them.
- Ask the front desk staff for the safest areas for jogging, walking, shopping, etc. Ask for a map of the area you are staying in.
- If you feel uneasy about going to fax, photo copying, laundry, pool, or exercise facilities alone, have someone go with you or tell the front desk where you will be.
- Hang the “Do Not Disturb” sign on the outside door knob when you exit, and leave a light and radio on. These discourage burglars.