Crime Prevention in Your Homes

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WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

2019 EDITION

FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS

EMERGENCY (IN PROGRESS)...... 911

Non Emergency	402-441-6000
Mayor's Office	402-441-7511
Chief of Police	402-441-7238
Crimestoppers	402-475-3600
Records Information	402-441-7210
Victim Assistance	402-441-7181
Internal Affairs	402-441-7222
Neighborhood Hot Line	402-441-6300

Lincoln Fire Department	402-441-7363
Lancaster County Sheriff	402-441-6500
Nebraska State Patrol	402-471-4545

- Lincoln-Lancaster County.....402-441-8000 Health Department Lincoln Water System....... 402-441-7571
- Lincoln Electric System...... 402-475-4211
- Animal Control..... 402-441-7900
- Attorney General Office...... 402-471-2682

Consumer Fraud Division

- County Court Office......402-441-7291
- Better Business Bureau......402-436-2345

HOSPITALS

BryanLGH East Campus 402-481-1111
BryanLGH West Campus402-481-1111
CHI Health St. Elizabeth402-219-8000
Veteran's Administration402-489-3802
Medical Center

POLICE TEAMS

Center Team	402-441-7751
Northwest Team	402-441-6555
Northeast team	402-441-6007
Southwest Team	402-441-7754
Southeast Team	402-441-7755

MISCELLANEOUS NUMBERS

Nebraska Family Helpline1-888-866-8660
Mental Health Crisis Center402-441-8276
Centerpointe Helpline402-475-6695
The Bridge402-477-3951
Behavioral Health
Child Advocacy Center402-476-3200
Keya Warmline402-261-5959
Families Inspiring Families402-441-4369
Anonymous Sexual Assault402-441-3866
(Online Reporting also Available)
Voices Of Hope402-475-7273

Lincoln Community Response......402-476-7398

INTRODUCTION TO NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

The Neighborhood Watch Program establishes a formal network for concerned citizens to communicate with their neighbors and the police regarding crime related problems. The program asks you to be involved with your neighbors, and their property, by becoming more aware and alert to the activity on your street. You will be the eyes and ears of the Lincoln Police Department.

The security of the city and its citizens depends upon the people themselves. No police department can effectively protect life and property without the support and cooperation of the citizens it serves. Every citizen should be a person who watches their neighborhood and reports criminal and suspicious activity to the Lincoln Police Department. It is important to realize that criminals find it difficult to operate in areas where citizens take an active role in reducing criminal opportunity and reporting suspicious activity. As you go about your daily routine you have the opportunity to casually observe the neighborhood. Such observations are useful in alerting neighbors and police to suspicious persons and activity in the area.

THE BLOCK SECURITY COORDINATOR

The Block Security Coordinator acts as the leader of the Neighborhood Watch Program for their particular area and serves as the group's liaison with the police department's Crime Prevention Unit. The coordinator must be a resident of the geographic area represented by the watch group. The Block Security Coordinator and watch group members have no legal authority on behalf of the City of Lincoln or the Lincoln Police Department. Block Security Coordinators and all members of the Neighborhood Watch Program are advised to limit their participation to the observation and reporting of any suspicious or criminal activity.

DUTIES OF THE BLOCK SECURITY COORDINATOR

The duties of the Block Security Coordinator are to contact new neighbors as they move into the area and encourage them to become a Neighborhood Watch member. The coordinator is responsible for insuring the ongoing success of the group. The coordinator can keep their group aware of new crime trends occurring in their area by passing on information received through electronic notification. Group meetings are not mandatory but they do promote social interaction which is important in maintaining a cohesive group. Please go to the Lincoln Police Department public website at **www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police** to receive up to date crime data and information pertinent to your neighborhood.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal. There are many people, such as service workers and utility workers, who have legitimate business within a housing area. There are however some criminals who would try to commit crime in your neighborhood by relying on a resident's lack of concern that they are there. If there is someone who is not familiar to the neighborhood who is loitering or is going to a house known to be empty it should raise a feeling of doubt. If a resident observes any activity that gives them feelings of mistrust or appears to be questionable they should call the police. The situation may not be an emergency so calling the Lincoln Police Department at 441-6000 is fine. Every phone call will generate a response from an officer in your area of town. The Lincoln Police Department would rather investigate a suspicious activity than get a call when it is too late. Your phone call could save a life, prevent an injury, or stop a criminal act.



IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

- If you observe someone in the area who may be prowling around homes or businesses, checking door handles to vehicles, or doors to businesses.
- You observe someone knocking on front doors of residences, then walking around the home, looking in windows, walking into the back yard, carrying a backpack.
- Someone soliciting and asking to come inside of your home to use your restroom.
- Vehicles driving through the neighborhood following delivery vehicles such as USPS, UPS, FedEx (Watch for this especially during the holiday seasons).
- If someone comes to your residence that you aren't expecting, ask for identification or DON'T answer the door at all.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

If You See Suspicious Activity...

Make Sure you stay on the phone with dispatch to give them as much information as you can. This information is being relayed to the officers responding to your call.

CRIME IN PROGRESS CALL 911

If Non-Emergency or belated, no threat or imminent danger, call 402-441-6000

Be prepared to answer the following questions either over the and/or upon officer arrival:

- Your Name (Not required)
- Your Address (Not required)
- What is the emergency?
- The location of the problem
- Description of the person
- Clothing description
- Facial hair
- Glasses
- How do they smell? Odor of alcohol, drugs, cologne?
- Tattoos, scars, marks
- Vehicle description
- License plate
- Last known direction of travel
- Are there weapons involved?
- Behaviors of person. What are they doing? What are they saying?
- What do you hear? Does it sound like someone is in danger?? Are they yelling for help?

ONLINE REPORTING

If you would like to talk to a Police Officer in person to make a report,

please call 402-441-6000

The Lincoln Police Department is committed to providing quality police services that promote a safe and secure community. Online reporting is provided for the convenience of the victim and is available for only a small segment of crime types. NOTE: If a crime is capable of being reported online by the citizen, it can also be taken by an officer through a dispatched call for service. To determine if online reporting is right for you please review the following guide:

Online reporting is NOT available if you answer yes to any of these questions:

- ♦ Is this an EMERGENCY situation? (call 911)
- Is this a crime in progress?
- Is anyone physically hurt or immediately threatened?
- Is the person reporting this crime less than 18 years of age?
- Are there any known suspects? (includes vague descriptions or vehicle license numbers)
- ♦ Is the value of the loss or damage \$1,500 or more?
- ♦ Was there a weapon present? (gun, knife, or other?)
- Is this a motor vehicle accident?
- Oid the suspect break into your house, garage, or vehicle?
- O you want an officer to respond in person?

If you responded yes to any of these questions or are still unsure if online reporting is right for you, please call 402-441-6000 for assistance.

Please note: all online reports are reviewed by police personnel. You may be re-contacted if further investigation or clarification is needed. FILING A FALSE POLICE REPORT IS A CRIME and if suspected will generate an investigation and possible prosecution.

ITEMS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE MUST BE LESS THAN \$1,500.00

Online reporting has been limited to victims (owners of the property stolen or damaged) of the following crime categories:

- \Rightarrow Stolen Bike
- \Rightarrow Lost or Stolen Item
- \Rightarrow Vandalism/Damage of Property

NOTE: Once completed, a case number and copy of the police report will be available for printing or download.

HOME SAFETY TIPS

- Have a deadbolt lock or keyless lock
- Have a peephole
- Do NOT hide keys outside (Burglars know most common hiding places)
- If you think someone has broken into your home, DO NOT GO IN, CALL POLICE FROM A SAFE LOCATION
- Close shades/blinds at night
- Lock doors, windows
- Close garage doors
- Install a security system
- Set lights on a timer at night. When you're away for the day, leave a light on inside to give the appearance that someone may be at home.
- Store ladders, tools and any other objects that can be used to assist in home entry, in a locked shed or garage.
- Store lock boxes or safes in a hidden area of the house. The basement or lowest level is recommend to reduce the risk of heat damage from a fire.
- Keep all personal information (passports, financial statements, etc.) in a locked fire proof safe or a safety deposit box.
- Keep record of serial number to electronic devices and firearms in case of a burglary
- Change the home entry's device access code periodically to prevent wear on the external keypad.
- Don't post the family's name on the mailbox or the house
- Don't talk about vacation plans in public areas or social media
- Secure a wireless network at home. Computer access could allow cyber criminals easy access to confidential personal information.
- Before placing anything in the garbage, do the following:
 - -Shred all papers containing personal information
 - -Destroy old computer drives
 - -Break down all boxes for high value equipment. Brand names on boxes alert thieves to valuable items inside of the house.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

DRUG ACTIVITY

Drug related activity continues to be a threat to neighborhood quality of life and sense of personal security. The use and sale of drugs in Lincoln/Lancaster County is prevalent and includes methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, prescription opioids, as well as synthetic designer drugs. The type of drug activity may be different from one neighborhood to another based upon location such as those having single family residences, apartment style living or light commercial to residential neighborhoods. No neighborhood is immune. The quality of life in your neighborhood depends on you and all of your neighbors.

Greater understanding of drugs and crime as well as an awareness of your surroundings is critical. Partnering with your friends and neighbors and the police department can help you feel better equipped to address changing dynamics in your neighborhood and improve your neighborhood quality of life.

Get to know your neighbors and help watch for some of these indicators and others:

Frequent and/or odd visitors at all times of the day or night. Frequent late night activity. Windows darkened out or curtains always drawn. Paranoid or odd behavior or extensive security measures. Chemical odors coming from house, garbage, or detached buildings. Coming outside to smoke. Setting out garbage in another neighbor's collection area. Neighborhood conversations expressing concern?

Many times there may be a reasonable explanation for a single indicator. Multiple indicators warrant greater scrutiny and can be reported to the *Lincoln Police Department* at **402-441**-**6000** and/or *Lincoln/Lancaster County Crime Stoppers* at **402-475-3600**.

FRAUDULENT CRIMES

Fraudulent crimes prey on a victim's good faith. Con artists are usually personable, fast talking, and persuasive. Many times a person who has been victimized will feel too embarrassed to make a report to the police. Con artists often rely on that mentality which allows them to victimize several people in succession. If you feel that you have been a victim of a fraud related crime call the police as soon as possible.

- Consumer Protection Division Attorney General's Office 402-471-2682
- Better Business Bureau 402-436-2345
- National Fraud Information Center 1-800-876-7060

TYPES OF FRAUDS:

<u>Craig's List</u>— Be aware of those who offer to give you more than what you're asking for your product that you are selling. They will send a check for more than the asking price, then request the extra money back from you. The check they send is later found to be fraudulent.

<u>ATM'S-</u> While using your ATM cards to make purchases at gas stations, banks, and other places, please be on the lookout for skimming devices. These can be placed over the real card reader, then used to gain access to your personal account and information. The information is then used to create false cards in the victim's name and the victim's account is accessed, leading to money lost. When using an ATM, pull on the card reader to ensure that it doesn't come apart. Also look for cameras that may be attached. If it comes apart, please notify the business owner and police immediately , so others don't fall victim to this crime.

<u>Grandparent/Grandchild Scam</u> Stay alert to those who call claiming to be your grandchild telling you that they are either hurt or in jail and need cash fast. Many have fallen victim to this Grandparent Scam. Check with the Lancaster County Jail at 402-441-1900 to confirm if your grandchild has been lodged in jail. If they are an inmate, there are services provided on their website for you to be able to send money.

<u>Warrant Scam-</u> People pretending to be law enforcement are making calls and telling people that they have warrants. They will then ask for you to send money via prepaid cards. No law enforcement agency will ever call and ask you to send money to clear up a warrant that you may have. If you need to confirm if you have a warrant, go to **lincoln.ne.gov** or call the **Lancaster County Court at 402-441-7291**, **The Sherriff's Office at 402-441-6500 or 402-441-7724**.

If you have any information about someone that you may know that has a warrant, you may contact the **Law Enforcement Warrant desk at 402-441-6000 or Crime Stoppers Hotline at 402-475-3600** or email agencies: Lincoln Police Dept. <u>LPD@cjis.lincoln.ne.gov</u> or Lancaster Sherriff's Dept.

FRAUDULENT CRIMES

<u>Romance Scams-</u> Be careful who you build a romantic relationship with online. These scams involve someone who will quickly fall in love with you. They will then begin to ask you to send money for traumatic events that have taken place in their lives or their close family member's life. They will ask you to send pre-paid gift cards. This is all in hopes to eventually meet you, but "events" keep coming up, and they will continue to ask you for money. Once victims find that this is untrue and they're out of money, the scammer is unable to be found.

IRS Scam- During tax season, be on alert for those who may be calling and claiming that they are from the IRS and demand that you send them pre-paid gift cards to cover the amount that you owe them. The IRS will never call you and ask you to send the pre-paid gift cards, or any money. Be sure to regularly check your credit report to ensure that your social security number has not been compromised. Call **402-473-4680** which is the **local IRS**.

<u>Sweepstakes Scam-</u> If you play the sweepstakes, keep in mind, that if you ever win money from a sweepstakes, they will not ask you to send money to receive your prize. Do not send money or prepaid cards to anyone claiming to have your prize and require that you send them money first to receive it.

<u>Utilities Scam</u>- Be aware of those who call claiming to be from your local utility provider. Scammers will call and threaten to shut off utilities if you don't immediately send them a pre-paid gift card within a short amount of time. Utility companies will not call you and ask for money for a bill that you owe.

If you have any questions, please contact your local provider to confirm any issues.

Lincoln Electric System 402-475-4211

Black Hills Energy 1-888-890-5554

Lincoln Water System 402-441-7571

<u>Home Repair Scam</u>- The scammer will come door to door especially following a natural weather disaster. They will offer home repairs that are not needed or not completed after the money is paid.

<u>ID Theft-</u>Criminals will try to use your name, credit card numbers, bank account numbers or your Social Security numbers to steal money or goods. Please shred your important documents that hold your name, account numbers or phone numbers before throwing them away. Also monitor your accounts that you have on your computer and change your passwords periodically. Try to have an encrypted wi-fi service so others are not able to obtain information through your internet service.

To avoid becoming a victim of these types of crimes, be sure to ask questions to whomever is making the offer. Do not make quick decisions. Take time to ask for references or consult with people that you know first. Be suspicious of anything involving high pressure sales, secret plans, or "get rich quick" offers. Never sign contracts without first knowing what you are getting involved in. Always consider consulting with family members, your attorney, your accountant, or the police department, before getting involved in something that seems too good to be true. Chances are, it probably is!

PERSONAL SAFETY

Most crimes are crimes of opportunity. A dangling handbag invites a purse snatcher. An unlocked window invites an intruder. If you eliminate the opportunity, you could avoid the crime.

At Home..

- Do not open the door to a stranger. Talk through a locked door or use a window to communicate with them.
- Ask for identification from all repair persons. Call and confirm their employment if you are uncertain.
- Ask to see their ID from any non-uniformed police officer before allowing them into your home.
- Instruct children and babysitters to not give out any information about who is home, who is out, and for how long they will be gone.
- Never leave a key "hidden" outside, they're easily found.

In Your Car..

- Park in well lit areas.
- Before getting into your vehicle, check your surroundings, including the interior of your vehicle.
- Lock your vehicle once you get inside of it.
- If you have a cell phone, carry it and have it turned on.
- Have your keys in your hand while walking to your vehicle or approaching your home.
- If you are being followed, don't drive home. Drive to the nearest police/fire station, hospital emergency entrance or 24 hour business. Call 911 and advise of your location.
- If someone tried to enter your vehicle while you're inside of it, honk the horn several times to draw attention, or drive away.

Out Alone..

- If possible, walk with a friend.
- Carry a whistle or noise maker.
- Carry your cell phone and have it on.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Walk with confidence.
- Carry your wallet in your front pocket. Carry your purse next to your body, and never leave it unattended in your vehicle
- Share your location on your cell phone with your loved ones.
- If wearing headphones, keep volume at a level to be able to hear what's going on around you.

PERSONAL SAFETY

In Trouble..

- If a robber demands your valuables, give them up! Your money or your jewelry is not worth risking injury or your life.
- Don't carry weapons such as guns or knives. They can easily be turned against you.
- If you are being attacked, remain calm...retain, or regain, your emotional stability. Your panic can cause your assailant to panic and possibly hurt you.
- Seeming to cooperate with your attacker may give you the time you need to devise a means of escape.
- If your attacker is armed and threatens to harm you, your child or someone else, you may think twice about physically resisting or attacking them. Remember though, no one can tell you how to react. You should do what you feel is best for you.
- Afterwards, call the police right away and write down everything you can remember about your assailant.
- Be selective of new acquaintances. Remember, not all rapist are strangers.
- Do not change clothing, bathe or apply any medication. Although this would be a natural reaction, don't do it. The physical evidence will be important in the prosecution of the attacker.

Note: The above are general suggestions on personal safety, your own common sense is your best guide.

Awareness Color Code Chart



For Children...

Children should learn to be cautious when around strangers. They must know the basic danger signs and techniques for dealing with situations encountered when alone. Discuss with your children the definition of a stranger. Explain that strangers who are identifiable through their profession such as a police officer, firefighter, nurse, etc., are strangers who can be trusted. Emphasize that the child must be sure of the authenticity of the person (i.e. uniform, police cruiser, location of the encounter, etc.) before they trust them.

PERSONAL SAFET

Safety Tips

- Most strangers act friendly, but there are some who are not friends. Even adults can't always tell who the friendly stranger is.
- Make certain your child knows he/she is not obligated to comply with the requests from strangers other than those identified by you as a trusted person.
- Friendly strangers offering gifts, candy or seeking help to find a puppy or ask for directions are not to be considered as friends. The child's first reaction should be to leave the scene and find a safe place. They should tell the nearest authority (teacher, parent, friend, police officer, babysitter).
- Never accept rides from strangers , go near or get into a vehicle for any reason.
 - 1. If the stranger keeps following them, run or walk in the opposite direction of the car.
 - 2. If they are still being followed, run and yell to attract attention.
 - 3. Find a busy store or house where you know someone lives.
 - 4. Later, with a trusted adult to help, report any such persistent follower to the police.
- Children should never get so close to a stranger that they can be touched.
- Discuss and show your child where they can find emergency help on the way to school. Encourage children to walk with a friend if possible, but to take suitable precautions when walking alone. If possible, the child's route to school should not lead past abandoned buildings, woods, etc., where they are cut off from the public view.
- Children should know their full name, address, parent's names and numbers, but never give it to a stranger. Children should understand that if they are lost, to know where to look for help. Parents should emphasize the kinds of people to look for in different situations when lost.
- Instruct your child to never allow a stranger into your home. If a stranger knocks on the door, a child should get a parent or older sibling to answer it. Children should never tell a person over the phone or at the door that they are alone.
- Have a secret password between you and your children for them to know if you have someone else picking them up from school, or picking them up from home, or a public place.



LARCENY FROM AUTO

Thefts have continued to rise over recent years. Projections for the future show this crime will continue to increase. Catching the criminal in act of breaking into someone's vehicle is extremely low based on the size of Lincoln and the limited amount of police officers working on patrol.

So what are citizens left with?? **PREVENTION**. To keep from becoming a victim involves knowing what makes a good target for a theft.

PROPERTY MOST STOLEN FROM VEHICLES:

- PURSES
- GYM BAGS
- CREDIT CARDS/CHECKBOOKS
 - LAPTOPS/TABLETS
 - SPEAKERS/SUBWOOFERS
 - RADAR DETECTORS
 - HAND/POWER TOOLS
 - CELL PHONE
 - MONEY

IF PROPERTY IS IN PLAIN SIGHT, THE CRIMINAL WILL SEE IT

WHAT DO THIEVES DO WITH THE PROPERTY THEY STEAL?

Many of these items are sold or traded between thieves. A small amount can be pawned for quick cash. Personal checking items can create bigger problems for victims. If a checkbook, credit/debit cards are stolen, the thieves will use those items right away at a 24 hours business and many times will max out an account in a short amount of time.

Remember, if you have your personal items stolen, immediately contact your bank or financial institution and cancel the cards and or checks. Also, keep track of all unauthorized transactions, which will help investigators with the case. Never leave PIN numbers inside of your wallet/purse.

KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN!

- If you hear glass breaking.
- If you see someone looking into cars and sneaking around.
- If you see someone tampering with a vehicle.
- If you see someone carrying tools or property that doesn't fit the setting in your neighborhood.
- If you do see someone breaking into a vehicle, try to get a description of the suspects, their vehicle, and what direction they are traveling. Call 911 immediately and stay on the line with dispatch to provide information. Remember, it's better to call in on suspicious activity and it turns out to be nothing, then to not call and find out a crime was committed.

HOME SECURITY

- Keep doors locked and garage doors down.
- Keep shrubbery trimmed below window level to eliminate hiding places.
- Keep yard clear of papers and newspapers that may show that you're out of town.
- Keep police and emergency numbers in or near your phone for easy access.
- Keep an eye on your neighbor's home and report any suspicious activity.
- Incorporate fire protection into your home security.
- Conduct fire escape drills.
- Maintain smoke detectors.
- Have escape routes to discuss and practice with family.
- House numbers should be highly visible from the street for first responders to arrive at your address in case of an emergency.
- Consider having lights on timers on both the inside and outside of your home.
- Never hide keys outside of your home.
- If using padlocks, selected ones that cannot be pried or cut off.
- Engrave you valuables, electronics, appliances, tools, bikes, etc., in an inconspicuous place. You can use your initials, name, or other distinctive marks that you can identify.
- Take a picture of your valuable's serial numbers or keep a log on a computer and put in a safe. Be sure to capture the brand name and serial number.



RECEIVE CRIME ALERTS

CRIMEMAPPINGTM. Helping You Build a Safer Community

www.//www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police/

Step 1: Receive Crime Alerts- Go to the LPD Homepage, click on (Police Activity), (Crime Alerts).

<u>Step 2: *Email Address*</u> Enter the email address you want the information sent to.

<u>Step 3: Location of Interest</u>-Enter the address for the location you are interested in.

<u>Step 4: Focus-</u> What is the radius from your location you want the alert to cover.

Step 5: Crime Types-Select the crimes you want to get reports on.

<u>Step 6: Sex Offenders</u> Check the box if you want information about sex offenders in the area.

Step 7: Almost there! -Click (Save) to finish.

*Add Crimemapping.com to your known senders list to avoid the emails from going to your SPAM folder!

"If you See Something, Say Something"



CRIME PREVENTION UNIT PROGRAMS

Presentations on crime prevention topics are available through the Lincoln Police Department Crime Prevention Unit. The presentations are free. Requests for a presentation should be made on the LPD Homepage under Crime Prevention "Request a Presentation".

https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police/

Please allow at least two weeks advance notice for setting a date and time.

Topics Presented:

- Active Shooter
- Business Security Survey
 - Business Watch
 - Neighborhood Watch
 - Personal Safety
 - Robbery
 - Senior Safety
 - Internet Safety
 - Fraud & Forgery
- Tours of Police Department for groups

Dear Neighbor,



We are starting a new Neighborhood Watch Group in your area. If you are interested in being a member please give your name, address, and phone number on the lines provided below and return this sheet to me.

Sincerely,					
Your Coordinator,					
	NAME		ADDRESS		GROUP #
Name		and			
Address	Phone		#	/	
Email					

Dear Neighbor,



We are starting a new Neighborhood Watch Group in your area. If you are interested in being a member please give your name, address, and phone number on the lines provided below and return this sheet to me.

Sincerely,					
Your Coordinator,					
	NAME		ADDRESS		GROUP #
Name		and			
Address		Phone #_		_/	
Email					

Lincoln Police Department Crime Prevention Unit 575 S. 10 Street Lincoln, NE 68508 402-441-6514 Ipdneighborhoodwatch@cjis.lincoln.ne.gov www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police

