

HOW TO OBSERVE

“We Look Out For Each Other” is the key to Neighborhood Watch success.

Observation, looking out for each other, is a skill honed through diligent practice. Watching includes both seeing suspicious activity and also listening for suspicious sound.

Here are 10 good tips on how to observe:

Knowledge

1 By knowing who belongs in each house, their hours of work, their automobiles, helpers who come into their homes regularly, you can observe what is happening in your neighborhood and easily become suspicious of anything that does not fit your neighbor's habits. This information should be available from your **Neighborhood Watch Institute (NNWI) Family Data Sheet Summary**.

Secrecy

2 Observe as secretly as possible. If something suspicious is happening, do not make the suspicious person aware that you are watching them. Look out for your neighbor — be the eyes, and the ears, of your local law enforcement agency. But remember, you are the eyes and ears, **not** the strong arm of the law. Don't confront a suspect — **Call your police or sheriff**.

At Home

3 Observe from your home. Whether you live in a house, a mobile home, an apartment or a condominium, you are the one determining which locations are best for observing normal and suspicious activity. Ideal locations for observing include, but are not limited to, upstairs windows, windows that face the street, windows that allow you to observe the alley, garages, back doors and your neighbors' yards.

On Foot

4 Observe on foot as you walk or jog through your neighborhood. Commit as much as your **NNWI Family Data Sheet Summary** to memory as you can. Memorize the check lists of Suspicious Activities and Sounds. Be alert to anything unusual happening in your neighborhood. Know your neighbors and your neighborhood. Practice what you have memorized by mentally reviewing what you know as you pass each neighbor's home.

Car or Bicycle

5 Observe by car or bicycle. This method of observation takes you further from your home and you must rely on your knowledge of **Suspicious Activities and Sounds**. Practice what is needed to report a Suspect Vehicle or Person. Practice license number memorization and the phrase, **“She Simply Could Not Have Had Any Really Good Early Warning About Him”** and its meaning. Be alert and be prepared to call your police or sheriff if you recognize anything suspicious.

Be Prepared

.....

- 6 Prepare yourself by having binoculars, including night vision binoculars. These are especially useful in rural and low-lit areas. A cellular phone will be useful in some areas, a CB or radio in others. If you are patrolling, which many Neighborhood Watch groups do, these are especially important.

You are the eyes and ears, *not* the strong arm of the law.

At Home

.....

- 7 When observing at night, don't look directly at what you are observing. If you look to the side, or above or below what you are observing, your vision will be more clear than if you looked directly at the subject. Also, prepare yourself by having a small, powerful flashlight, if you need to use it without arousing suspicion. Mag-Lite is an especially good brand.

Trust Your Judgement

.....

- 8 Recognize and understand what you are observing. Practice observation techniques. Put them together with your ability to evaluate, deduct, organize your thinking and make judgments. Recognize when to call for help. When your judgment (instinct) tells you something wrong is happening or is about to happen, **CALL IMMEDIATELY - DON'T HESITATE.**

Notes

.....

- 9 The written word, with dates, times and properly written notes, is crucial to your reporting and following up on the criminal activities of any suspects. First, your memory is clearer when you write down, immediately, what you see, logging the time of your notes. If you remember something else later, note it also, with the time. Record the suspect's description and activity, any license plate number of a vehicle, anything you might be called upon to report. Always keep a notebook and pen or pencil with you.

Practice

.....

- 10 Practice. Practice. Practice. Like any technique, practice makes perfect. Use your head to assimilate all you are exposed to and evaluate what you see and hear. No athlete, no pilot, no book-keeper, not anyone, can perform up to their utmost without practice. You will learn a great deal in your Neighborhood Watch training. Practice what you learn.

Suspect Something?

Call Immediately!

Don't Hesitate