

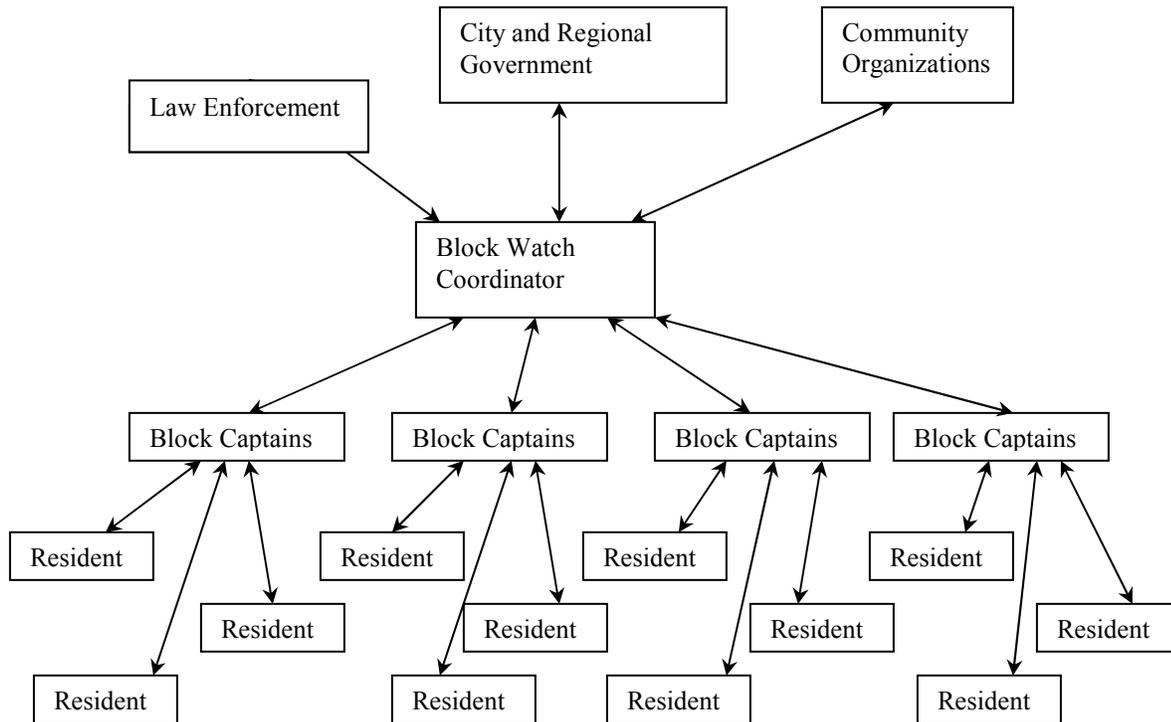


## Getting Your Watch Group Organized

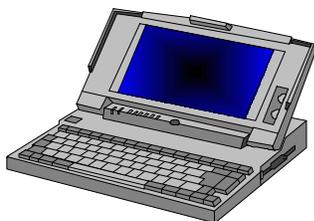
Block watch is based on one of the oldest concepts of safety: **keeping an eye out for your neighbors**. The practice started with “night watchmen” back in Europe and Britain, continued over to the New World, and was once again established officially in the 1970s as Neighborhood Watch. The program costs very little time, almost no money, and can have up to a 50% effect on residential crime.

**In the organization of a Block Watch program, there are two essential steps:**

**Communicate** – This means that individual residents communicate with Block Captains, Block Captains communicate with the Block Watch Coordinator, and the Block Watch Coordinator communicates with **Law Enforcement** and other organizations on behalf of the group.



In this way, many residents trying to communicate directly with officials do not duplicate the efforts of the group, and **information is efficiently disseminated** from the group leaders to the individual residents. A **phone tree** is often used to facilitate this communication, and **email** can serve the same function in some groups if enough residents have access to the Internet. It is important **not to leave out those residents without phone or computer, however; door-to-door canvassing** and meeting new residents when they move in is an extremely powerful tool to make new residents feel welcome and safe.





**Motivate** – This can be a harder step; groups often form after a severe crime or rash of crimes in their area, and residents are highly motivated to work together and try to curb the problem, and are often willing to put in long hours planning and attending meetings, communicating with officials, and “getting the word out”. However with success often comes complacency, and the group may find itself drifting off, unmotivated and unsure of what to do now that the problem has been “solved”. Many groups address this problem by **getting involved in non-crime related activities, such as neighborhood cleanups, social gatherings, and fundraisers.**

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The Neighborhood Services Division can be contacted for assistance in the following:

- Personal Safety presentations;
- Home Security presentations;
- Agenda items for your block watch meetings;
- Block Watch certification procedure;
- Getting connected with the NS liaison assigned to your area;
- Information sharing during a block party or other neighborhood event.

**Neighborhood Services Division (816) 513-3200 or [solutions\\_ncsd@kcmo.org](mailto:solutions_ncsd@kcmo.org)**



City Of Kansas City, Missouri  
Neighborhood and Community Services Department  
Neighborhood Services Division

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If you need to use the Relay Service, please dial 711.