

Neighborhood Watch Programs

Neighborhood Watch programs are successful ways to reduce crime and make your neighborhood a better place to live. If you don't already have an active neighborhood watch program, consider organizing one. For information on neighborhood watch Programs and other crime prevention programs, call (970) 498-5159.

The ABC's of Neighborhood Watch

- Any community resident can join -- young and old, single and married, renter and homeowner.
- A few concerned residents, a community organization, or a law enforcement agency can spearhead the effort to organize a neighborhood watch program.
- Members learn how to make their homes more secure, watch out for each other and the neighborhood, and call the Sheriff department to report activities that appear suspicious.
- You can form a neighborhood watch group around any geographical unit: a block, apartment, park, business area, housing complex, office.
- Neighborhood watch groups are not vigilantes. They are extra eyes and ears for reporting crime and helping neighbors. Neighborhood watch programs help build pride and serve as a springboard for efforts that address community concerns such as recreation for youth, child care, and affordable housing.

Getting Organized

When a group decides to form a neighborhood watch, it:

- Contacts the Sheriff's department for help in training members in home security and reporting skills and for information on local crime patterns.
- Selects a coordinator or block captain(s) who is (are) responsible for organizing meetings and relaying information to members.
- Recruits members, keeping up-to-date on new residents and making special efforts to involve the elderly, working parents, and young people.
- Works with law enforcement to put up neighborhood watch signs.

Neighbors Look For . . .

- Someone who appears to be in distress or who is screaming or shouting for help.
- Someone looking into windows and parked cars.
- Unusual noises.

- Property being taken out of houses where no one is at home or from closed businesses.
- Cars, vans, or trucks moving slowly with no apparent destination, or without lights.
- Abandoned cars.

Report these incidents to the Sheriff's department. Talk about the problem with your neighbors

How to Report (Call 911 if it's an emergency, otherwise call 416-1985)

- Give your name and address.
- Briefly describe the event -- what happened, when, where, and who was involved.
- Describe the suspect: sex and race, age, height, weight, hair color, clothing, distinctive characteristics such as beard, mustache, scars, or accent.
- Describe the vehicle if one was involved: color, make, model, year, license plate, and special features such as stickers, dents, or decals.

SIGN UP FOR -

WWW.Nextdoor.com

Crime Map -- <https://www.larimer.org/sheriff>

Staying Alive --

It's an unfortunate fact that when a neighborhood crime crisis goes away, so does enthusiasm for neighborhood watch programs. Work to keep your neighborhood watch group a vital force for community well being.

- Organize regular meetings that focus on current issues.
- Organize community patrols to walk around streets or apartment complexes and alert the Sheriff to crime and suspicious activities and identify problems needing attention.
- Publish a newsletter that gives prevention tips and local crime news, recognizes residents of all ages who have "made a difference", and highlights community events.
- Don't forget social events that give neighbors a chance to know each other -- a block party, potluck dinner, volleyball or softball game, or picnic.

CRIME PREVENTION ON THE MOUNTAIN

Crime is a serious problem in rural/mountain areas across the nation. Property crimes are climbing at alarming rates in rural areas and smaller communities, not just cities.

Remote and isolated areas have always faced a special vulnerability to crime – combined with relatively unprotected high-value equipment and infrequent law enforcement patrols in many areas. The growing problem signals the need for positive crime prevention measures in mountain communities such as Crystal Lakes or Red Feather Lakes.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

Criminals look for easy targets – where the risk of detection is slight and the profits are high. But some simple, common sense crime prevention practices can make your home and property less attractive and less available to the criminal.

You can take steps to:

- Avoid some risks like removing some items to a safer location, such as a safe deposit box or locked up out of sight.
- Carefully select locks, dusk-to-dawn lights or motion lights, and lights on a timer. This will sometimes cause the criminal to take more time, make more noise, and be more visible as he/she acts (crooks don't want to be seen or heard). You may prevent the completion of a crime, and perhaps even discourage a contemplated attempt. Here are some steps to lessen the chances of becoming the target of a theft or burglary:

1. Keep expensive machinery and vehicles near the residence in a visible, well-lighted area. Lock all vehicles (this also helps to keep the bears from entering as well).
2. Keep valuable tools, chemicals, and portable machinery in sturdy outbuildings or garages and secure them with strong doors and deadbolt locks, or with casehardened steel padlocks and hasps.
3. Get a few solar powered motion-sensor lights in dark areas that have no electric power.

4. Keep all doors (sheds, garages, etc.) closed and locked when not in use. Close your garage doors when leaving – don't advertise your absence.
5. Install deadbolt locks on all exterior doors of your residence; secure sliding glass doors with at least a "Charley/Katie Bar" and install good locks on all windows.
6. Don't leave keys to your house or buildings hidden outside (under the mat, phony rocks or containers made to look like "droppings"), and don't leave messages for visitors tacked on your door ("I'll be back at 2PM").

GET INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighborhood Watch is a community crime prevention program that can dramatically lower the burglary and break-in rate in your area. Active Neighborhood Watch programs encourage cooperation in crime prevention and discourage the criminal interested in your possessions. Successful Neighborhood Watch groups can:

1. Watch over each others' property and REPORT suspicious persons, vehicles or activity promptly to the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. Social media is NOT a way to report this type of incident (Facebook, Nextdoor, etc.).
2. Notify neighbors when you will be away – but don't advertise your absence to the entire community (again: Social media). Also, know when your neighbors are away.
3. Learn to recognize legitimate neighborhood vehicles.
4. Post large Neighborhood Watch signs in a visible location at the entrances to your community.
5. Report ALL crimes to the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. You can do reports on line too, but calling is best.

Stopping Speeders in the Community

Resource Topic:
Covenant/Rule Enforcement

Whether you live in a single family, townhome, or condominium community, your association most likely has speed limits set for the private streets within your community. The purpose of speed limits is to protect residents and guests of the community. Whenever drivers fail to obey the speed limits set on private roadways, they pose an unnecessary safety risk for everyone in the community. This article will discuss different methods used in communities to help reduce speeders on its private streets.

Prior to discussing these methods, it is important to distinguish between private and public streets running through a community. Private streets are considered part of the common area or common elements of an association. Private streets are maintained by the association and owned by either the association or by the individual condominium owners as tenants in common. Public streets are dedicated to and maintained by a city or county. The distinction between public and private streets is important because an association may not have authority to adopt and enforce rules with respect to public streets. In the event the streets running through your community are public, legal counsel should be consulted regarding your enforcement rights.

As with any type of rule, the goal of speed limits is to obtain voluntary compliance, and, in most cases, that is achieved. However, when voluntary compliance isn't significant, other methods can be used to deter speeding within your community.

Installation of Speed Bumps -

Installation of speed bumps in the streets forces drivers to slow down or experience an unpleasant jolt and possibly minor car damage. Currently, two types of speed bumps may be installed with the only difference between the two being size. The traditional speed bump is 3 to 4 inches in height and about 12 inches wide. The second type of speed bump is generally referred to as a speed hump and is between 1.5 to 3 inches in height and is slightly broader than the bump.

Speed bumps are generally recommended for smaller communities with speed limits averaging approximately 15 mph. Speed humps, on the other hand, are appropriate in larger communities with higher speed limits and traffic volumes.

An association should be aware, however, that a potential may exist for liability, or at least a law suit, when a driver damages his car by going too fast over speed bumps. To help reduce the probability of liability, the following measures may be helpful:

- placing bumps at distances recommended by professionals
- placing warning signs at entrances to the community and advising owners in writing of installation of the speed bumps in advance
- not placing speed bumps at intersections
- providing at least 150 feet of clear vision when approaching a bump
- painting bumps in a conspicuous color such as yellow

The association should additionally be aware that some municipalities enact ordinances prohibiting the placement of speed bumps or other similar speed control devices on private streets. Therefore, prior to installing any speed bumps in your community, review local ordinances to ensure there are no prohibitions against such speed control devices.

Another way to limit objections to the bumps is by involving the residents in the decision making process. For example, homeowner meetings may be held for the purpose of discussing residents' views and opinions of speeders in the neighborhood and to obtain recommendations from the residents. Also, a committee may be formed that will attempt to contact homeowners and discuss traffic issues. Educated homeowners are more likely to voluntarily comply with rules and regulations of the association. Therefore, by openly discussing the speeding problems in your community, you may help to promote voluntary compliance with the speed limit.

Placement of Stop Signs --

Stop signs will require drivers to come to a stop at designated points in the community. Strategic placement of stop signs can prevent drivers from speeding up between signs and, in turn, reduce speeding. There is no set rule regarding where to place stop signs, however, it may be most effective to place signs at intersections on longer roadways where it is easy to accelerate and speed. Placing stop signs at all such intersections will make it difficult for drivers to accelerate and speed through the community.

Despite their benefits, stop signs have the practical problem of enforcement. Many drivers fail to come to a complete stop at the stop signs or, even worse, fail to slow down entirely. One option for the association is to contact its local city council or police department for assistance. The city may be willing to temporarily increase the number of patrol units sent to the community. Once the community has the reputation of being a high "ticket" area, drivers may be more likely to obey both the speed limits and stop signs.

Radar Systems --

A third alternative is for an association to purchase a radar device of some type. The two most common is a radar trailer that flashes a car's speed in large bright numbers as it approaches the trailer or a radar gun. Either system can be utilized by an association to monitor speeders and issue warnings and fines to those violating the association's speed limit, if desired.

Radar trailers work by drawing driver's attention to their speed in hopes of discouraging speeding. On the other hand, a radar gun is used to record a car's speed and then issue a fine. The use of a radar gun would require monitoring. This means someone would have to physically monitor the cars as they go through the radar and record license plate information. An alternative to physical monitoring is installation of a video system that will photograph the speeders' license plate and record the speed at which the driver was traveling. A list of community vehicles and license plate numbers will need to be maintained by the association so warnings and fines may be mailed to those observed speeding. Therefore, it may be necessary for the association to amend its governing documents or adopt a resolution requiring owners within the community to provide vehicle information to the association. In the event a speeder is not a resident of the community, the association will not be able to issue such warnings. However, the mere presence of visible speed monitoring devices in the community may be enough of a deterrent for drivers to slow down in the community.

Speed Enforcement Provisions --

Most governing documents do not provide for a speed enforcement plan. However, an association may, after consultation with its legal counsel, adopt such a plan. A speed enforcement plan may

provide for a fine system for speeders within the community. The association may designate a committee that would have authority to monitor drivers, through a radar system, and issue fines for speed limit violations.

Again, the practical problem with this type of plan is enforcement. Assuming the speeder is not a resident of the community, the association will not have a legal mechanism in place for enforcement and collection of such fines. However, if the speeder is a resident of the community, the speeder will be bound by the association's rules. Therefore, if the association adopts a speed enforcement plan, with fines for violations, it may collect through the lien and assessment collection process, as long as the violator has an opportunity for a hearing prior to imposing the fine. The association should amply advertise its enforcement plan, for example, by way of community newsletters and/or signs. Many times a resident's knowledge that he or she is being monitored and may be fined is incentive enough to slow down.

Conclusion --

There is no single cure for speeders within a community. However, with a carefully thought-out plan, some speed bumps, stop signs, and speed limit signs, drivers may realize the association is serious about preventing speeders in the community and penalties may be incurred if the speed limit is ignored.

<http://www.hindmansanchez.com/resources/newsletter/stopping-speeders-community>

ALL EMERGENCIES --- 911

NON-EMERGENCIES --- 416-1985

LCSO INFORMATION --- 498-5100

DIVISION OF PARKS & WILDLIFE --- 472-4300

ANIMAL CONTROL --- 226-3647

LCSO WEBSITE --- www.co.larimer.co.us/sheriff

DPW WEBSITE --- www.wildlife.state.co.us

HUMANE SOCIETY WEB --- www.larimerhumane.org

CRYSTAL LAKES OFFICE --- 881-2250

CRYSTAL LAKES WEBSITE --- www.crystal-lakes.org

