

## Crime Prevention Builds Safer Communities

Yes, it is true that our citizens are the most valuable assets we have to prevent crime in our communities! In fact, modern policing places an emphasis on the relationship between the law enforcement organization and the people of the community through the creation of positive partnerships. When this occurs, information is shared between citizens and police regarding potential and ongoing criminal activity in neighborhoods. As a result plans can be developed to creatively and effectively address concerns. In essence, police and citizens join forces to develop problem solving strategies and tactics that help to enhance public safety and resolve crime and public safety related issues. With that being said, it is important to remember that the people of the community actually are a key factor in helping us to promote safer neighborhoods and keep the crime rate low in Trent Woods. Here are some ways that our citizens can work with us to help maintain a healthy and peaceful way of life in our town.

Let's start by looking at some of the benefits that occur when neighbors look out for each other and then report suspicious activity to us. Neighbors' working together promotes a sense of unity and cohesion that helps to reduce the fear of crime where they live. Not only does neighborhood cohesion help to increase surveillance and environmental awareness in the community when neighbors work together, it also promotes good crime reporting by citizens. When this occurs the community comes together around a common goal: that is living in a place where the crime rate is low and people and property are protected. In short, when a potential problem arises in a neighborhood it generates some discussion among citizens that in turn gets reported to the police department. Citizens may report crime or suspicious activity individually or collectively to directly inform the police of what they are seeing or hearing. From there we can work together to solve the problem and address your concerns. This leads us to our next point; how to go about reporting what you see occurring in your neighborhood.

The first step in effective crime reporting is being able to recognize what is suspicious or unusual for your neighborhood. You can make this a team effort amongst your neighbors by simply talking with them. For example, when you leave to go out of town you can enhance the safety of your home by having your neighbor(s) check your mail, look out for suspicious vehicles on your property or in the neighborhood, and learn what appears normal or abnormal at your home while you are away. Keep in mind that different people have different perspectives on what appears to be unusual or potential crime related activity. Encourage your neighbors to contact us based on what they believe is abnormal or unusual so we can investigate right away. Unusual activity for your neighborhood may include the following: people looking into parked cars or house windows, property being removed from a house, people sitting in vehicles on the side of the road, loud noises, glass breaking, people shouting, car alarms going off, dogs barking, etc. In addition, you should also teach your children to recognize and report safety concerns and suspicious activity, particularly if they are at home by themselves.

Lastly, another crime prevention effort you can take is requesting a home security check by the police department. While you are away, police officers from Trent Woods Police will

check your home and investigate if anything unusual is found. Simply contact us or Trent Woods Town Hall to complete the request. Crime prevention and protecting citizens is extremely important to us and will always remain our top priority. We cannot emphasize enough how much we rely on our citizens to help us in the effort to keep Trent Woods as safe as possible. To make a report to us you may call 911 or Trent Woods Police (252) 637-3030 to speak with an officer. We provide police services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are here to support and serve you. We appreciate all that you do to help us in the crime prevention effort!