

**Westgate Community Association's neighborhood watch program:
Neighborhood Watch-Citizens On Patrol of Westgate**

A Brief History & Statement of Purpose

Westgate Community Association has been host to a neighborhood watch program for several years. Our blockwatch program in its current form, NW-COP of Westgate, was organized in October of 2004, after a spree of tire-puncturings and other acts by unruly juveniles prompted some of our residents to step forward and re-invigorate our community's long-standing volunteer blockwatch program. We are a blockwatch group and a citizen patrol group.

"Neighborhood watch", "blockwatch", "citizens on patrol" are all commonly used terms; part of the lexicon of "community policing"; a field of police science and law enforcement pioneered during the early 1980s in city neighborhoods which existed within bigger cities like New York, Chicago and Detroit. During that era, residents, grass roots activists, business owners and law enforcement professionals alike brainstormed together to find ways to protect their older neighborhoods, endangered by professional theft rings and other forms of predatory crime. Researchers learned from residents that they often felt isolated from the big city police departments sworn to protect them. As a response to this complaint, new strategies to promote closer communication ties between neighborhood groups and local police were pioneered. "Block watch" and "citizen patrols" were among the community-involving techniques employed. They soon proved their worth. Higher levels of trust and cooperation did develop between community groups and local police. Often resulting with a decrease in both crime and the fear of crime.

Westgate's NW-COP program volunteers are *not* substitutes for the trained law-enforcement professionals who serve us. Rather, we assist those professionals in their effort to protect us by acting as additional eyes and ears.

If you have been the victim of a crime, or are suspicious that criminal activity is going on; you should call 9-1-1.

The goal of NW-COP of Westgate is to improve quality of life in the community by reducing crime, fear of crime and potential for crime; by improving communication between our residents and local police; by uniting residents toward the common goal of a crime-free neighborhood and by discouraging anyone from thinking about committing a crime in our neighborhood.

If a crime *didn't* happen in your neighborhood today; maybe there is an anonymous blockwatcher to thank.

Thank you to Westgate's Citizen On Patrol patrollers and our Neighborhood Watch blockwatchers for generously donating your time!

A special acknowledgment to local law enforcement, our first responders, both city and county. You put your lives on the line every day to defend and protect us. We appreciate your dedication and sacrifice.