



## Perris News

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### Perris Hopes to Expand Neighborhood Watch Program

The City of Perris is determined to expand its Neighborhood Watch Program and is looking for civic-minded citizens to step forward, organize volunteers on their block or housing tract and become the eyes and ears of the community to thwart crime and criminals.

The Perris Police Department, working with the City Council, has set up about 20 Neighborhood Watch groups from one end of Perris to the other.

While saying they are pleased with the efforts of those volunteers, City officials would welcome the creation of more Neighborhood Watch groups.

To bolster those efforts, the City has ordered additional Neighborhood Watch signs, stickers and decals.

"We consider Neighborhood Watch part of our overall strategy to fight crime and assist in public safety, which is our top priority as a City," said City Councilman Al Landers.

"But the impetus must come from the neighborhood. We will supply the tools, but the driving force must be members of the community. People need to step forward and become the eyes and ears for their community. This program is really about people helping people."

Landers said he has attended many Neighborhood Watch meetings in Perris and is always impressed with the spirit of those volunteers who organize and commit to the program.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said he too hopes to see the Neighborhood Watch program expanded. He said the program puts citizens in communication with Perris police and helps them become "part of the solution" to making Perris a better place to live and work.

"When they participate, they get involved," Yarbrough said. "I am committed to using every possible deterrent to keep our City as safe as possible. We will work with the Perris Police Department to establish Neighborhood Watch programs where support exists and to expand them in areas where it's needed."

City officials credit Neighborhood Watch, along with the Perris Citizens Patrol and an innovative Zone Policing program in Perris with helping reduce crime by more than 40 percent in the last 10 years.

"The more eyes and ears we have, the more they drive down crime and drive criminals away," Yarbrough said.

Perris Community Service Officer Gina Montenegro said police officers regularly attend Neighborhood Watch meetings to discuss the program and crime prevention efforts against crimes like burglaries, car break-ins, domestic violence, gangs, drugs and the importance of keeping children away from strangers.

Montenegro said individuals must take the initiative to start a Neighborhood Watch program. Once the police are contacted, a time and date is set for the initial meeting and the Perris Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit makes copies to distribute to residents.

More information about the Perris Police Department's Neighborhood Watch program is available at [gmontene@riversidesheriff.org](mailto:gmontene@riversidesheriff.org)



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough says citizen involvement with Neighborhood Watch means members of the community are part of the solution to reducing crime.



Perris City Councilman Al Landers: Neighborhood Watch is "really about people helping people."