

# **RIVER BEND COMMUNITY WATCH**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To increase the Effectiveness of Police Service by Working  
in Partnership with the Community to Safeguard  
Life and Property and to Enhance the Quality of Life in Our Town

# **Watch Patrol Policy and Procedure Manual**



## **The Community Watch Program**

River Bend Community Watch is an organized group of concerned citizen volunteers mobilized to assist the River Bend Police Department - to serve and protect the community. Members of the Community Watch patrol the Town as additional eyes and ears of the police, watching and listening for suspicious criminal activity or unsafe conditions. If we see a crime we report it!

Immediate and accurate reporting of a patroller's observations will effectively prevent crime and apprehend criminals - strengthening the partnership between the community and the police who serve us, making our Town a safer and better place to live and work.

### **Primary Objectives of Community Watch**

- Maintain a cooperative system of surveillance over each other's property.
- Accurately and immediately report suspicious activity, crimes in progress or dangerous conditions to the police.
- High visibility of neighborhood patrols.
- Watch members trained as competent witnesses.
- Assist the Police Department, other agencies and crime victims whenever possible.
- Work with Police Officers, municipal government, residents, and all Town stakeholders to accomplish the goal of better and safer River Bend.

## **Community Teamwork Fights Crime**

Working together, we can eliminate criminal activity and make our neighborhoods safer by:

- General awareness, being informed and not afraid to report criminal activity.
- Keeping an eye on our neighbor's house, especially when they are away on vacations, etc.
- Watching out for children and the elderly.
- Walking and riding patrols.
- Showing a "we care about our neighborhood" attitude which will deter criminal activity.
- Being alert for sources that cause neighborhood deterioration such as poor property maintenance.
- Becoming good witnesses.
- Maintaining programs, meetings, and activities that keep us all involved.
- Sticking together so no one has to go it alone.

## **Our Goals**

Neighborhood Watch is a community-minded effort to continue to enhance the...

- Lawfulness
- Stability
- Peace
- Security
- Safety
- Order
- Appearance

...of our neighborhoods.

The Watch looks for obvious signs of crimes in progress. In regards to crime, our motto is:

**"See it. Hear it. Report it"**

## **Membership**

- Membership is free.
- Watch members must reside in the Town of River Bend and be at least 18 years of age.
- All resident applicants must fill out a membership application. You will be notified within 30 days regarding the status of your approval to join the Community Watch. Review and final determination for all membership applications will be made by the River Bend Police Department. Membership may be terminated at any time for unacceptable behavior or violation of the Rules and Regulations set forth by the Police Department and Community Watch.
- All members will be registered by the River Bend Police Department. When registered, you will be issued a Community Watch membership card. This card is the property of the River Bend Police Department and must be surrendered if you move out of the Town, resign your membership, or your membership is revoked.
- Every member will receive organizational literature and this Policy and Procedure Manual detailing crime reporting, patrol and general guidelines.
- Community Watch Patrollers are not allowed to carry firearms or weapons of any kind. Patrollers are to "see it - hear it - report it" and are not to engage suspected criminals or attempt to apprehend.
- Members are not to consume alcoholic beverages while participating in Watch activities and no member may perform Watch duties while impaired by alcohol or other drugs.
- Members are not to divulge proprietary or confidential Community Watch or law enforcement information to the general public or use such information for personal gain or agenda.

## **The Benefits of Joining**

- Having a vote in the operation of the association at membership meetings, and in elections for watch positions at the annual membership meeting.
- Having the fast track to reporting crime and unsafe conditions.
- Notifications about crime trends and scams in your neighborhood
- Ability to volunteer for community events sponsored by the Watch.
- Being a part of community crime prevention.
- Education on how to protect yourself and your property.
- Opportunity to serve on various action committees and task forces with the goal of improving the safety of the community.
- Having the means to prevent crime in your neighborhood.

## Watch Patrol Guidelines

### **SCOPE OF POWER AND DUTIES OF THE WATCH PATROLLER**

- A patroller does not possess Police powers.
- You cannot make an arrest. Do not confront, attempt to apprehend or arrest a suspected criminal.
- You cannot carry firearms, night sticks, mace or any type of weapon.
- You are not above the law. You must obey the law.
- A Watch Patroller's duty is to be a passive crime fighter:
  - A high-visibility mobile crime deterrent.
  - A vigilant observer.
  - A good witness.
  - A thorough and accurate report writer.
  - A helpful friend to local law enforcement.
  - A person who sends a clear message to criminals that you don't tolerate crime in your neighborhood and that you are not afraid to report crime.

### **SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR PATROL**

- Flashlight.
- Pocket notebook and pen.
- Cell phone, if possible.
- Neighborhood Watch Identification and Driver's License.
- Appropriate dress to include Watch shirt and cap.
- Community Watch vehicle flags or signs.

### **STARTING PATROL**

- Patrol in random fashion at staggered times whenever possible.
- Team up with another patroller whenever possible.
- Notify someone that you are going on patrol and expected time of return.

### **PATROL SAFETY**

- NEVER put yourself in danger.
- Watch for slippery conditions and trip hazards.
- Do not go on private property.
- Do not confront a suspected criminal or attempt to make an arrest yourself.
- Patrol in pairs, if possible.
- Dress to be seen. The Watch Patrol is designed to be a crime deterrent as a result of the high visibility of patrollers. For your own safety, do not dress darkly or operate by stealth.

### **PATROL OBSERVATION**

- Be observant and vigilant.
- Look and listen for the unusual and suspicious, such as:
  - Open doors, garages and gates that are usually closed.
  - Suspicious persons and vehicles that don't belong in the neighborhood.
  - Sounds such as screaming, gunshots and breaking glass
  - Anyone or anything out of the ordinary for your neighborhood.
- You know your neighborhood. If it doesn't seem right - it probably isn't.

### **SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES THAT SHOULD BE REPORTED**

- Anyone who is looking into parked vehicles or windows.
- Anyone sitting in a parked vehicle - in front of a home or business, especially at an unusual hour.
- Anyone removing parts or license plates from a vehicle.
- Anyone going door-to-door without apparent reason.
- Anyone loitering around the neighborhood or parks.
- Anyone loitering outside of, entering or leaving a place of business after hours.
- A stranger going into a backyard.
- A stranger going into an unoccupied or abandoned house.
- A stranger loitering around children.
- Vehicles cruising slowly back and forth on your street.
- Drug activity of any kind.
- Sounds of gunshots, screaming, someone in distress, breaking glass, etc.
- Evidence of forced entry into houses and vehicles.
- Any obvious crime in progress.

### **FILE A REPORT FOR THESE NON-CRIME RELATED CONDITIONS**

- Code violations
- Nuisance and Dilapidated properties.
- Safety hazards.
- Violation of a neighbor's right to quiet enjoyment.
- Maintenance of public facilities
- Vandalism and/or graffiti

## **CALLS TO THE POLICE - EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY**

Be professional, patient and as cooperative as you can. The police officer or dispatcher needs a certain amount of information to determine the coding, disposition and priority of your call. Follow these guidelines:

- Call 9-1-1 for crimes in progress and emergency situations.
- Call 638-1108 (River Bend Police) for non-emergency incidents.
- Stay on the line and give all information requested by the officer or dispatcher.
- Be patient - the Police will respond as soon as possible. Police response depends on the patrol area they respond from and the priority of the call.
- Upon arrival of officers, immediately identify yourself to avoid confusion.
- Do not interfere with the Police investigation but be available for questions.

## **INCIDENT REPORT AND FOLLOW-UP**

- Retain your notes for future reference and further incident investigation.
- As soon as practical, fill out an Incident Report while the facts are still fresh in your mind.
- Write legibly and be as accurate as you can. Describe:
  - What happened? (Give an accurate and detailed account of events)
  - Where? (Give exact locations)
  - When? (Be accurate in your time line of events)
  - Who? (Detailed description of persons involved and names, if known)
  - Why? (The circumstance, incitement or cause of the incident)
  - How? (Method of operation in the suspected crime)
- Give the Incident Report to the River Bend Police officer on duty.
- Be a willing witness to Police, giving written statements and testimony, if required.

## **Beyond Watch Patrols – Public Relations and Community Involvement**

- Be proud to serve your community as a crime stopper and protector of neighbors.
- Be a good example in your neighborhood.
- Help a neighbor in need.
- Become high profile – get to know your neighbors. Let them know you're a Watch Patroller and that they can come to you with problems and concerns.
- Distribute consumer protection, anti-crime and anti-drug literature (available from the Watch) to your neighbors.
- Volunteer for Community Watch events, projects and programs.
- Serve on a Community Watch committee or task force.
- Attend Membership Meetings.

**River Bend Community Watch Important Phone Numbers**

<b>EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS</b>	
<b>Emergency</b>	<b>9-1-1</b>
<b>River Bend Police</b>	638-3870
<b>Chief of Police E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:policechief@riverbendnc.org">policechief@riverbendnc.org</a>
<b>RIVER BEND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>Town Hall</b>	638-3870
<b>Water Resources</b>	638-3540
<b>RIVER BEND COMMUNITY WATCH</b>	
<b>Jim Kelly – Co-President</b>	252-288-5668
<b>Egon Lippert – Co-President</b>	252-672-0060



## RIVER BEND COMMUNITY WATCH

### CITIZEN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(You must be a River Bend resident 18 years or older)

#### Applicant's Information:

Name	Date of birth	
Address:	E-mail:	
Phone: Home	Mobile	Work
Place of employment		

#### List names of all residents of your household (use back, if necessary):

Name
Name
Name
Name

**\* NOTE Separate applications must be completed for each Community Watch applicant.**

#### Participation:

Do you have an interest in (please check):

- Performing Watch Patrols?
- Volunteering for special events?
- Volunteering to staff the police office?
- Serving on committees and task forces?
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this application, I hereby express my desire to become a member of the River Bend Community Watch. I understand that a criminal records check may be used as a basis of determining my suitability for membership and consent to having such records check performed. If accepted to membership, I agree to follow the policies and procedures outlined in the manual provided to me and other lawful policies and procedures as may be from time to time adopted by the Watch or the Town of River Bend.

Signature	Date
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**RIVER BEND COMMUNITY WATCH**  
**CITIZEN MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND PRIVILEGES**

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Members are not to divulge proprietary Community Watch or law enforcement information to the general public or use such information for personal gain or agenda.

**Privileges of Membership:**

Each member:

1. May have one (1) vote at general meetings and at the annual membership meeting.
2. May run for Organization Officer offices.
3. May serve on task forces, standing and appointed committees.
4. May bring business before the membership.
5. May have items placed on meeting agendas for consideration.
6. May voice comments, suggestions, questions and concerns at general meetings.

# TOWN OF RIVER BEND

## Community Watch Volunteer

### Acknowledgement, Waiver and Release of Liability

READ CAREFULLY, THIS IS A GENERAL RELEASE OF CLAIMS FOR INJURY:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print), hereby agree to the following  
(initial each item below):

\_\_\_\_\_ Initials  
1. I understand there is an inherent risk associated with any community program that may result in injury, including my voluntary participation in Community Watch. Patrol duties may challenge my cardio-respiratory and musculoskeletal systems. I understand and am aware that the components of participation in Community Watch are potentially hazardous activities and may cause injury.

\_\_\_\_\_ Initials  
2. I, for myself, my heirs, personal representatives, and assigns, do hereby waive and release the Town of River Bend, its elected officials and employees from any and all liability and responsibility for injury, accident, illness, legal and medical fees sustained now or in the future resulting from my participation in any Community Watch related activity.

\_\_\_\_\_ Initials  
3. I acknowledge that I have read this waiver of liability form. I fully understand its terms and conditions, and understand that I am giving up my right to sue the Town of River Bend, its elected officials and employees. I acknowledge that I am signing this agreement voluntarily, and intend by my signature for it to be a complete and unconditional release of liability to the greatest extent allowable by law.

In consideration of participation in a Town of River Bend volunteer program or activity granted to the undersigned by the Town of River Bend, I, for myself, my heirs, personal representatives, and assigns, recognizing the dangers and risks associated with participation in such programs and activities, do hereby assume said dangers and risks involved in and associated with same at the Town of River Bend facilities, and do forever discharge the Town of River Bend, its agents, servants, and/or employees, of and from any and all claims, demands, damages, actions, causes of action, or suits of every kind, character, and description which I, my heirs, personal representatives, and assigns, may have for, on account of, or in connection with the permission extended to participate in a Town of River Bend recreational program or activity, or in any manner, directly or indirectly, resulting from, arising out of, or in connection with participating in such program or activity.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_