

Block Watch

Neighbors Partnering with Neighbors and Police to Fight Crime

Detecting, Deterring and Solving crime is *directly* related to the level of community involvement.

- Blockwatch signs may be ordered / customized for your neighborhood
- Need map of neighborhood, list of neighbor contacts, Blockwatch captain
- Encourages neighbors to watch out for each other and partner with the police to help make their neighborhood safe and deter crime.
- **Report suspicious activity, persons and / or vehicles:** Many incidents (and even some crimes) go unreported. This is *your* neighborhood and you know who should be here. Legitimate visitors do not mind if a police officer asks them about being in the neighborhood. And, suspicious person and vehicle contacts are used to track potential crime in an area so do not hesitate to contact the police if you feel something or someone seems “out of place.”
- **Most Common Crimes in Neighborhoods:** **Residential Burglary** (often due to garage doors being left open / unlocked), **car prowls** (due to unlocked doors or windows left down), **fraud** and **identity theft** (usually connected to burglaries and car prowls), **vandalism** and **mail / package theft** (from non-locking mailboxes or porches)
 - Please contact your neighbors if you see their garage door left open day or night...
 - ***To close your blinds or not...*** Burglars do not shop from house to house for quality items to steal. It's a crime of opportunity and they look for homes that appear to be unoccupied “easy targets.” More crime occurs in areas where shades are closed.
- **Do not leave anything of value inside your vehicle.** Wallets, checkbooks, computers, cameras, GPS units and purses are most commonly taken. If you discover that your vehicle has been prowled, try not to touch it if possible. Our chances of finding fingerprints or evidence from a possible suspect are minimized if the vehicle is cleaned or moved. And, do not leave your vehicle running while unattended. This is a crime of opportunity for car thieves and one of the highest causes of stolen vehicles.
- **If you discover your home has been burglarized:** Call 911 immediately. Please remember if you start cleaning up or moving items, the chance of locating fingerprints or evidence is minimized.
 - Make your home unappealing to burglars. Remove items such as ladders from the yard, trim landscaping to allow visibility, avoid “doggy doors” if possible, lock all windows (including second story) or place dowels in the tracks, leave exterior lights on at night or install motion lights, place some interior lights on timers, etc.
- **When calling 911 from your CELL phone:** Tell the call receiver who answers what city you are calling from. Most 911 cell calls are initially routed to Washington State Patrol. If you advise the call receiver what city you are calling from, they can transfer you to the correct reporting agency.
- **When calling 911 from your HOME phone:** The King County Sheriff's Office Communications / Dispatch Center is located in Renton. King County dispatches emergency services for the City of Sammamish as the city contracts its police services through the King County Sheriff's Office. Non-emergency number for King County Dispatch Center: 206-296-3311.

- When calling the Dispatch center please answer their questions as best you can. Remember: if you are calling about a suspicious person or vehicle, give the best description you can. License plate, direction of travel, what the person looked like and what was suspicious.
- **Door to Door Solicitors:** Business licenses are required in the City of Sammamish for most businesses (some religious and charitable organizations exempt). Homeowners are encouraged to report aggressive or suspicious solicitors. **As of 04-11-12:**
 - No one shall be allowed to solicit without a permit obtained from the city
 - Solicitor is required to keep the license on his person at all times and produce it upon request
 - No solicitation is allowed at residence marked with “No Solicitation” sign
 - Any violation of these conditions is a misdemeanor crime
 - Sample solicitors license: <http://www.sammamish.us/News.aspx?ID=1330>
- **If you have an Alarm System:** Use it! And, please make sure that other members of the family or person(s) you have watching your home know how to use it properly (including housekeepers). Common causes of false alarms include Mylar balloons and animals setting off the motion detectors, unsecured doors or windows, etc.
 - If you do not have an alarm, consider buying alarm signs to place near front and rear doors.
- **There is a false alarm ordinance in the City of Sammamish Municipal Code.** (If you have two or more false alarms in a six-month period you may be fined). The majority of alarms that the Police respond to are false. Please help us in preventing false alarms.
 - Fine Structure – False Alarms** (in a rolling six month period)
 - 1st – no charge
 - 2nd - \$100
 - 3rd - \$150
 - 4th - \$250
 - 5th and up - \$250
- If an officer responds to your home for an alarm, they will leave a yellow door hanger indicating what was found and the alarm coverage area. **If you receive a yellow false alarm notice, contact Officer Alana Hall at (206) 205-1891 during regular business hours.** She will work with you to try and solve the problem if it was determined to be a false alarm. By contacting the police, it shows that you are a responsible homeowner and are trying to help us eliminate the problem of false alarms. Officer Hall may request you to provide her with some information to avoid being fined.

Remember: We would rather work with you on false alarm solutions than have you return home to find your home was burglarized! Use your alarm if you have one!
- **Vacation House Checks:** The Sammamish Police Department provides this service free of charge to city residents. Visit the Sammamish Police Department (801 228 AV SE) Monday through Friday during normal business hours and complete a short form (also available online at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us). Recommended for vacations that will be three (3) days or more. If you leave for vacation, please cancel newspaper and parcel delivery and have someone collect your mail (or put in a “stop mail” order with USPS).
 - The Sammamish Police Department also offers security audits and information specifically for securing your home. If you would like to have an officer come to your home to discuss crime prevention and / or security for your home, please contact the police offices during regular business hours at 425 295-0770.
- **Fraud / Identity Theft:** Generally occurs from resident’s mail being stolen or a burglary or car prowling where credit cards or check books are stolen. A locking mailbox is the most effective option to prevent mail theft. Keep credit cards and check books locked or hidden in a secure place inside your home. Do not leave these things in your vehicle!

- **Operation ID:** Consider marking your property and complete an inventory with serial numbers / model numbers and descriptions of all valuable items. To mark your property, engrave your complete driver's license number on the item. Things to consider marking include cameras, computers, TV's, etc. An engraver is available at the Sammamish Police Department on a check-out basis if interested.
- **Know what you have!** Most homeowners have no idea what brand of camera they own, or how much jewelry they have, or the serial number for their laptop. Keep a master list of model and serial numbers for all electronics, firearms, tools, vehicles, etc. Take detailed photographs of jewelry, art work or other items of value and store the information in a safe place.
 - Store valuables in unusual places. Burglars typically go to the master bedroom first. Keep jewelry, watches, keys, important documents, etc. secured and not in an obvious place.
 - Make your home hard to get into and your items hard to steal, but if they are stolen – make it easy for police to find your belongings and catch the bad guy!
- **Safes:** Consider using a heavy duty safe or fire safe and make sure it is secured to the floor or wall. A safe that can be carried away can be opened at the burglar's convenience. If you prefer not to use a safe, consider using a safe deposit box.
- **Surveillance Cameras:** If you have or are considering surveillance cameras, work with a reputable company to get the best quality cameras possible. Place them high enough to avoid tampering, but low enough to get clear facial shots. One pointed towards the street to capture vehicles is also helpful. Place cameras at the front *and* rear of the home. If using a DVR, make sure it is not with your computer.
- **National Night Out:** Nationwide (event held first Tuesday in August). This is one evening where neighborhoods celebrate by having potlucks, barbeques or just social gatherings to meet neighbors. Everyone turns on their porch lights to show suspects / criminals we are proud of our neighborhoods and look out for our neighbors.

Additional Resources

- Crime prevention booklet handed out to all households present. Also available online at www.ci.kent.wa.us/police/crimeprevention
- www.kingcounty.gov/sheriff -website -you can check for registered sex offenders in the Sammamish Area.
- www.citizencops.gov-website –you can learn more about mapping your neighborhood. Useful tool to have in case of natural disasters.
- www.crimereports.com - Citizens can enter their address and see the recent crimes in their area. They can filter the list to look for specific types of crimes or everything in their area for up to the last 30 days.
- City of Sammamish website: www.ci.sammamish.wa.us – There is a tremendous amount of information on the city website, including a link for online crime reporting. **You may also sign up for e-mail alerts from the home page** (upper right corner “E-Mail Alert Sign-up”).
- Online crime reporting:
<http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/departments/lawenforcement/OnlineReport.aspx>
- **Facebook:** Sammamish Police



Smart911

At a September 11, 2012, news conference, King County announced the launch of Smart911 - a supplemental data service that allows you to Create a Safety Profile that can be seen by emergency responders when you call 9-1-1. King County is the first jurisdiction in Washington State to implement Smart911, with all King County 9-1-1 centers fully operational in early 2013.

Create your Safety Profile today at Smart911.com.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does Smart911 work?

Go to Smart911.com and click on "Create your Safety Profile". Then, when you call 9-1-1 from a registered phone number, that profile will be displayed at the 9-1-1 center. The information can also be accessed by police officers, firefighters, and medics in the field. The data is secure and is only available to emergency service personnel when you call 9-1-1.

What kind of information can I list in my Safety Profile?

You can include as little or as much information in your profile as you like, with different information for each registered phone number(s). Information may include address, medical, disability, and security information. This service is voluntary, so you decide what information you want emergency responders to know about you when you call 9-1-1.

Who should create a Safety Profile?

Anyone can Create a Safety Profile. Those that are especially encouraged to register are people with medical or disability information. Wireless phone users should also register as wireless phone calls to 9-1-1 only provide a general location of the caller, not an exact address. Registering your home, school and work addresses (including apartment and room numbers) can help responders locate you more easily.

How long does it take to Create a Safety Profile?

Setting up a profile can take as little as 10 minutes, depending on how much information you wish to provide. You can always go back and update existing, or add additional, information to your profile.

Is there a cost to register for Smart911?

There is no fee to create a Safety Profile with Smart911. King County is providing this enhanced level of service with funding from the 9-1-1 excise taxes.

Can I register my family members?

You are encouraged to Create a Safety Profile that includes everyone in your household. You can also Create Safety Profiles on behalf of elderly parents, or those with disabilities, designating yourself as the primary contact.

What if English is not my primary language?

You can create a Safety Profile in multiple languages and specify your primary language. When your profile displays at the 9-1-1 Center it will be translated back into English. If an interpreter is required, the 9-1-1 Call Taker will be able to see which language you designated as your primary language.

Once I have registered do I need to do anything else?

The more up-to-date your information is, the better. Smart911 prompts registered users to verify their information every six months. However, you should update your profile anytime there is any change to your information.

Is my information secure?

Smart911 utilizes the latest in physical and computer security technologies and conducts regular audits to ensure all information held in Smart911 is kept secure, and only made available to 9-1-1 and field responders when you call 9-1-1.