

NATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH INSTITUTE • EST. DOCTRINE SINCE 1972



# Neighborhood Watch Volunteer Handbook

## A 12-Week Crime-Prevention Program

A turnkey 12-week Neighborhood Watch academy, rooted in NNWI training doctrine. This is a **sample edition** — NNWI.ai tailors every page to your agency, your jurisdiction's crime picture, and your own Neighborhood Watch sign.

**Prepared by:** National Neighborhood Watch Institute — sample edition for review

**From:** National Neighborhood Watch Institute (NNWI) • [nnwi.org](http://nnwi.org) • [nnwi.ai](http://nnwi.ai)

Generic sample volunteer packet, ready to customize for any agency or community. SAMPLE v1.0.

## What's inside — and how this packet helps your area

This packet is a turnkey 12-week Neighborhood Watch academy. It gives a coordinator everything needed to stand up — or re-energize — a watch: the doctrine, the volunteer duties, a code of conduct, and twelve ready-to-teach weekly modules built around the crimes neighborhoods actually face. This is a sample edition; in your own copy the present-day examples and the sign on the cover are customized to your agency.



### YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH SIGN

The sign on the cover is a generic NNWI Neighborhood Watch design. In your edition it carries **your agency's name, jurisdiction, and non-emergency number** — produced from NNWI's production sign masters, the same sign families NNWI has supplied to agencies since 1972.

#### INSIDE

### Policies & procedures

Section C (Volunteer Code of Conduct & Field-Safety Rules) and Appendices I–II give you a ready-to-use policy spine — the "what we do / what we never do" rules that keep volunteers safe and the program defensible.

#### INSIDE

### Duties & responsibilities

Section B lays out the volunteer role in plain language — Block/Area Watch Captain, welfare-check volunteer, vacation house checks, and event & outreach support — ready to map onto the programs your agency already runs.

## Why a 12-week format

Rather than hand a volunteer a binder and hope, the NNWI model trains the way a watch actually forms: one idea at a time, building from "who are my neighbors?" to "how do I observe, report, and prepare?" Twelve weekly modules give a coordinator a turnkey academy — each week is one meeting, one doctrine source, one present-day your area application, and one hands-on activity.

"As a member of Neighborhood Watch, you are already helping your community **LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER ...** our purpose is to help [law enforcement] by serving as extra **eyes and ears** for them — without endangering ourselves or anyone else in the process."

SOURCE — NNWI HANDBOOK, INTRODUCTION

## Two doctrine sources behind every page

Source document	What it anchors
<b>NNWI Participants Handbook</b>	The watch spine — Get Involved, Know Your Neighbors, How to Observe, Recognizing Suspicious Activity & Sounds, Suspect & Vehicle ID, Phonetic Alphabet, Reporting / Calling 9-1-1, Participant's Responsibilities, Family Data Sheet, Telephone Tree, Block Maps.
<b>NNWI Emergency Preparedness Handbook</b>	The readiness spine — the 23-item Basic Emergency Kit, the 7 Ways to Safety, and the "Get Informed / Be Informed / Stay Informed" discipline (Week 11).

Present-day your area application in each week is drawn from current crime data for your area — see **Sources** on the final page.

## The doctrine — "We look out for each other"

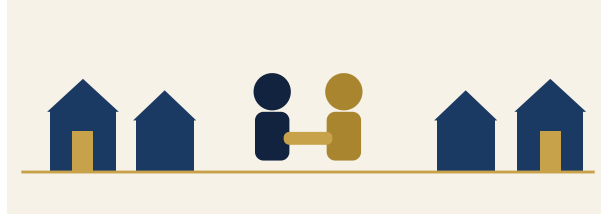


Fig. A — The watch is neighbors + law enforcement, not vigilantes. The volunteer is the connective tissue.

Everything in this program flows from one idea older than the program itself: a community that watches out for one another is the cheapest, fastest, most effective crime-prevention tool any agency has. The volunteer's job is never to confront, pursue, or police — it is to **observe accurately, report clearly, and connect neighbors**.

### The three doctrine pillars

1

#### EYES & EARS, NEVER HANDS

Volunteers extend the agency's awareness. They watch and report; they do not engage. Safety of the volunteer is the first rule, ahead of any observation.

2

#### KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

A block where people know each other's names, cars, and routines spots the abnormal instantly. Relationship is the sensor.

3

#### BE PREPARED, STAY INFORMED

The same network that reports a burglary is the one that checks on an elderly neighbor in a heat wave or a wildfire evacuation. Crime prevention and emergency readiness are one muscle.

4

#### REPORT IT — EVERY TIME

"It was probably nothing" is how patterns hide. Doctrine: when in doubt, report. The agency decides what matters; the volunteer's job is to surface it.

"Working together can save lives and minimize property damage... Everybody can do something really well, even if they may not know it yet. The point is: try to identify everyone's strengths."

SOURCE — NNWI EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK, P.1

### From the NNWI casebook — what alert neighbors actually did

Three real incidents from the handbook — in each the participant **observed and called, and did not engage**. As NNWI puts it: "WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER is not only our motto — it is our call to action." They noticed, then called.

#### 3 A.M. CAR AT AN ELDER'S HOME

A woman woke to a car at an elderly neighbor's house — one man waited, one slipped around the corner. She called police; they caught the second man breaking into a closed store next door, and his accomplice minutes later.

#### KNOCK, THEN AROUND THE SIDE

A man knocked, got no answer, and went around the side of a house. The participant didn't recognize him as living there and called. Police found him inside, burglarizing the neighbor's home.

#### THE OPEN GARAGE

A neighbor left to shop, garage door open. A participant saw two teens who'd been riding slowly through the neighborhood enter the garage; she called the sheriff, who stopped them down the street with a box of stolen auto tools.

## Volunteer duties & responsibilities

The duties below are the standard roles a trained Neighborhood Watch volunteer can fill. In your edition they are mapped to the specific programs your agency already operates.

Duty	What the volunteer does	Typical program
<b>Block / Area Watch Captain</b>	Maintains the block map & telephone tree, hosts watch meetings, relays agency alerts, welcomes new residents, is the single point of contact for their cluster of homes.	Neighborhood Watch
<b>Welfare-check volunteer</b>	Makes scheduled visits or calls to residents who live alone; escalates to the agency if there is no contact after several attempts.	Senior / welfare checks
<b>Volunteer patrol observer</b>	Marked-vehicle or foot observation, vacation checks, and residential security surveys (after background check & training) — observe-and-report only.	Volunteer patrol
<b>Vacation house check</b>	Scheduled checks of homes whose residents filed an away-notice; looks for forced entry, accumulated mail, open gates; logs each check.	Home vacation check
<b>Event &amp; outreach support</b>	Staffs National Night Out, fingerprinting, bike registration, community fairs, Operation I.D. etching events.	Crime prevention unit
<b>Administrative support</b>	Data entry, mailings, front-counter assistance — freeing sworn staff for sworn work.	Agency volunteer program

### The NNWI Participant's Responsibilities

These are the responsibilities the NNWI handbook places on every Neighborhood Watch participant — condensed here as the volunteer's standing duties.

- 1. Learn your neighbors' names** and all occupants; recognize them and their vehicles "without any hesitation."
- 2. Attend all Neighborhood Watch meetings.**
- 3. Keep your Family Data Summary, Block Map & Telephone Tree** in a secure place, continually updated.
- 4. Properly identify property** (Operation I.D.) and keep an accurate inventory of valuables.
- 5. Implement security measures** suggested after a home security survey.
- 6. Learn accurate suspect & vehicle description** — practice the NNWI sentence (Week 5) by writing it from memory.
- 7. Keep an eye on neighbors' homes** and report suspicious activity; write the description down so you forget nothing.
- 8. Display Neighborhood Watch warnings;** report vandalized, missing, or rusted signs for replacement.
- 9. Teach children** respect for the law and personal-safety habits.
- 10. Report crime — never take risks to prevent it or make an arrest.** "The responsibility for apprehending criminals belongs to the police/sheriff."
- 11. When away,** hold mail, stop newspapers, use light timers, take in cans — "Don't leave signals saying 'no one is at home.'"
- 12. Notify neighbors & the Block Captain** when you'll be away so attention can be added to your home.
- 13. Look out for each other.** Be a good witness with written notes. "You can make a real dent in crime in your neighborhood."

"Everyone should always know what to do, who to call, where to reunite — and to be patient." That sentence is the whole job description: **know, call, connect.**

SOURCE — NNWI EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK, 7 WAYS TO SAFETY #1

## Volunteer code of conduct & field-safety rules



ALWAYS

### A VOLUNTEER ALWAYS...

- Puts personal safety first — disengages and calls for help when uncertain.
- Reports observations promptly and factually.
- Wears assigned ID; carries no weapon on duty.
- Treats every resident with courtesy and impartiality.
- Keeps resident data confidential.
- Logs hours and activity.



NEVER

### A VOLUNTEER NEVER...

- Confronts, detains, chases, or directs traffic into danger.
- Enters a residence or vehicle, or touches potential evidence.
- Represents themselves as a sworn officer.
- Uses program information for personal benefit.
- Acts on bias — race, dress, or "looking out of place" is not a crime.
- Posts case details or resident data to social media.

### The bias guardrail (read aloud in Week 1 and Week 4)

Suspicious behavior is about **what a person is doing**, not who they are. The doctrine of "recognizing suspicious activity" is built on actions — looking into car windows, carrying property from a back yard, a vehicle circling slowly — never on appearance. This rule protects residents *and* protects the program's legitimacy.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read and understand the community Neighborhood Watch Volunteer Code of Conduct & Field-Safety Rules, and agree to operate within them.

Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION D

## The 12-week program at a glance

Wk	Module	NNWI doctrine source	Present-day your area focus
1	Welcome & the doctrine	Get Involved · History · Responsibilities	Why watch matters in your community
2	Know your neighbors	Know Your Neighbors · Block Maps · Telephone Tree	Welfare checks & isolated seniors
3	How to observe (safely)	How to Observe	Eyes & ears, never hands
4	Recognizing suspicious activity & sounds	Suspicious Activities · Suspicious Sounds	Opportunistic property crime
5	Describing people & vehicles	Suspect ID · Vehicle ID · Phonetic Alphabet · Plates	Getaway-vehicle & plate accuracy
6	Reporting & calling 9-1-1	Reporting a Crime · Calling 9-1-1	911 vs. the non-emergency line
7	Home & vehicle security · Operation I.D.	Operation I.D. · Inventory of Household Items	Theft from unlocked vehicles & homes
8	Package & mail theft	How to Observe · Reporting	Porch piracy & mail theft
9	Vehicle & catalytic-converter theft	Vehicle ID · Operation I.D.	Vehicle & converter theft
10	Fraud & scams	Participant's Responsibilities	Impersonation scams targeting seniors
11	Emergency preparedness	23-Item Kit · 7 Ways to Safety · Stay Informed	Your area's top hazards
12	Putting it together & graduation	Family Data Sheet · Responsibilities	Vacation house checks & ongoing service

Each module = one ~75-minute meeting: **10 min** doctrine · **20 min** present-day your area application · **25 min** activity/drill · **15 min** Q&A · **5 min** assignment for next week.

# 01 MODULE ONE Welcome & the doctrine

NNWI: Get Involved · History of Neighborhood Watch · Participant's Responsibilities



Fig. 1 – Your **community** Neighborhood Watch sign – the artwork on file with NNWI. The sign is a promise, not a decoration: *"We immediately report all suspicious persons & activities – We Look out for each other."* Set in the official Neighborhood Watch lettering (Switzerland / Swis721) with the agency name and contact line, it is the same sign family NNWI has produced for agencies since 1972.

## OBJECTIVE

New volunteers leave understanding what Neighborhood Watch is, where it came from, and the one-sentence job: **be the eyes and ears, never the hands.**

## DOCTRINE

Neighborhood Watch is the oldest and largest crime-prevention program in the country because it works on a simple principle — neighbors who pay attention deter crime before it happens. The volunteer multiplies an agency's reach without ever stepping into enforcement.

## TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**Context** Nationwide, property crime makes up the large majority of reported offenses — most of it opportunistic theft from unlocked vehicles, homes, porches, and mailboxes (FBI UCR / NIBRS). Those are exactly the crimes an attentive block prevents, which makes a watch program highest-leverage right where most communities' risk actually lives. **localize with your county's data**

## ACTIVITY

- Sign the Code of Conduct (Section C).
- Each volunteer states one block they can help organize.
- Hand out the Family Data Sheet (completed by Week 2).

## TAKE-HOME

Walk your block once this week. Note how many homes you could name the residents of. Bring the number.

## 02 MODULE TWO Know your neighbors

NNWI: Know Your Neighbors · Block Maps · Telephone Tree · Family Data Sheet

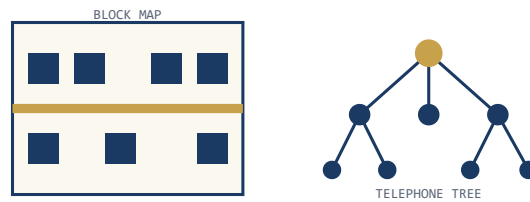


Fig. 2 – Two NNWI tools: the block map (who lives where) and the telephone tree (how word travels in minutes).

### OBJECTIVE

Build the human sensor network: a block map, a telephone tree, and a completed Family Data Sheet for every participating home.

### DOCTRINE

A block where neighbors know each other's names, cars, and routines notices the abnormal instantly. The map and tree turn that familiarity into a system that survives when any one person is away.

### TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**welfare checks** Isolated and homebound neighbors are both the most vulnerable to crime and the easiest for a watch to protect. The same block map that flags a burglary flags the neighbor nobody has seen in days — crime prevention and welfare-checking run on one roster.

### ACTIVITY

- Draw your block map live; mark every occupied home.
- Build a 3-tier telephone tree for one block.
- Identify residents who may need a welfare check.

### TAKE-HOME

Introduce yourself to two neighbors you've never spoken to. Add them to the map.

# 03

MODULE THREE

## How to observe — safely

NNWI: How to Observe



### OBJECTIVE

Teach the discipline of observing without being seen as a threat and without ever engaging.

### DOCTRINE

The volunteer's value is an accurate report, and an accurate report requires calm, distance, and detail. The doctrine is explicit: serve as eyes and ears **"without endangering ourselves or anyone else in the process."** If observing puts you at risk, you stop observing and call.

### THE OBSERVE LOOP

Step	Do
Notice	What first caught your attention? Trust the instinct, then verify with facts.
Position	Stay back, stay in the open, keep an exit. Never follow into a yard, alley, or vehicle.
Note	Time, location, direction of travel, description (Week 5 method).
Report	Call it in (Week 6). Let the radio, not your feet, do the chasing.

### ACTIVITY

"60-second witness" drill — instructor shows a 60-sec clip; volunteers write down everything they can recall. Compare. (Memory is worse than everyone thinks — that's why we write it down.)

## Recognizing suspicious activity & sounds

NNWI: Recognizing Suspicious Activities · Recognizing Suspicious Sounds

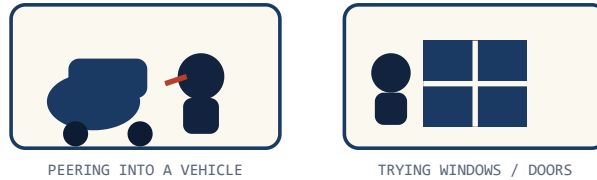


Fig. 4 – Suspicious is about *behavior*: checking car handles, trying windows, carrying property from a back yard.

### OBJECTIVE

Recognize the behaviors that precede the crimes your area actually experiences — and just as importantly, what is *not* suspicious.

### DOCTRINE + BIAS GUARDRAIL

Suspicion attaches to **actions**, never appearance. NNWI's own teaching: *"In any situation, recognize what is routine and what can cause suspicion... Anyone doing anything that looks suspicious should be reported. Trust your instincts."* A person walking a dog at night is not suspicious; a person trying car-door handles down a row of parked cars is.

#### NNWI SUSPICIOUS-ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

- Loitering around cars or checking out all the cars (casing for theft).
- Fleeing while carrying something, or running at night.
- Going door to door — **especially if someone goes to the rear** of a residence.
- Loitering around schools, parks, or on your street.
- Offering items for sale at extremely low prices (possibly stolen).
- A stranger with young children/teens in an unusual place or for an unusual time.
- Anyone creating a disturbance; anyone who "just doesn't belong."

#### NNWI SUSPICIOUS-SOUNDS CHECKLIST

"Sounds may last only a few seconds." Report:

- Cries for help / continuous screaming.
- Screaming & cursing (often domestic violence).
- Gunfire — note number of shots, source, multiple shooters.
- Alarms activated; shattered/breaking glass.
- Loud music that may be masking another activity.
- Unusual sounds; dogs barking persistently.

Doctrine: *"Heroes can be wounded or killed. Apprehension is the job of your police or sheriff."*

### TODAY IN YOUR AREA — CRIMES OF OPPORTUNITY

**opportunity crime**

Most property crime is opportunistic: theft from vehicles is consistently the single largest larceny category nationwide (FBI NIBRS). The classic NNWI behaviors above map straight onto it — car-hopping a row of parked cars, following a delivery truck, testing side gates, or a slow-circling vehicle watching homes.

### ACTIVITY

"Suspicious or not?" sorting deck — 15 scenarios; volunteers sort against the NNWI checklists and defend each call. Instructor corrects any appearance-based (bias) call on the spot.

# 05 MODULE FIVE Describing people & vehicles

NNWI: Suspect Identification · Vehicle Identification · Phonetic Alphabet & License Plates



Fig. 5 – Describe a **person top-to-bottom** with the NNWI sentence; describe a **vehicle** by Kind · License · Color · Make & Model · Year · Additional details.

## OBJECTIVE

Give a description an officer can act on — and read a plate back correctly the first time. NNWI doctrine: *"Recognition is of equal importance"* to observation.

## THE NNWI SENTENCE — MEMORIZE IT

NNWI teaches one sentence carrying the **12 features of a suspect's description**, ordered by what's least likely to be altered. "Keep repeating this sentence until you memorize it... it will help you remember the 12 important aspects of the suspect's description."

"She Simply Could Not Have Had Any Really Good Early Warning About Him."

NNWI PARTICIPANTS HANDBOOK — SUSPECT IDENTIFICATION, P.17

Word	Reminds you of	Word	Reminds you of
<b>She</b>	Sex	<b>Really</b>	Race / skin color
<b>Simply</b>	Scars, marks, tattoos, deformities	<b>Good</b>	Gun or other weapon
<b>Could</b>	Carrying anything	<b>Early</b>	Eyes / glasses
<b>Not</b>	Nose & facial features	<b>Warning</b>	Weight / build
<b>Have</b>	Height	<b>About</b>	Anything unusual
<b>Had</b>	Hair	<b>Him</b>	Head covering (cap, mask, wig)
<b>Any</b>	Age	Work <b>top to bottom</b> ; sex, height, weight & race are hardest to change — get those first.	

## VEHICLES — KIND · LICENSE · COLOR · MAKE & MODEL · YEAR · ADDITIONAL

Kind (2-door, SUV, van, pickup, motorcycle) · License plate & state · Color & shade · Make & Model · Year (guess if unsure) · **Additional**: stickers, dents, lowered/raised, missing hubcaps, crash damage.

## THE PHONETIC ALPHABET (READ YOUR PLATE LIKE A PRO)

A-Adam B-Boy C-Charles D-David E-Edward F-Frank G-George H-Henry I-Ida J-John K-King L-Lincoln M-Mary N-Nora O-Ocean P-Paul Q-Queen R-Robert S-Sam T-Tom U-Union V-Victor W-William X-X-ray Y-Young Z-Zebra

NNWI plate example: 3-Adam-Boy-Charlie-555. This "Adam-Boy-Charles" set is the phonetic alphabet West-Coast agencies use on the radio.

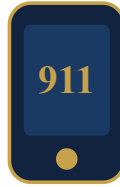
## DIRECTIONS & LOCATIONS — THE NOW-SEE RULE

An accurate location needs a direction; the sun sets in the **west**. To tell which side of a street an address sits on by its number:

- **NOW** = **N**orth **O**dd **W**est — odd numbers are almost always on the north & west sides.
- **SEE** = **S**outh **E**ven **E**ast — even numbers are almost always on the south & east sides.

## ACTIVITY

Partner drill: describe each other top-to-bottom from memory using the NNWI sentence; then phonetically read five plates from photos. Practice it "as you walk, jog, bike or drive."



## OBJECTIVE

Know when to call 9-1-1, when to use the non-emergency line, and exactly what to say.

## 9-1-1 VS. NON-EMERGENCY

Call 9-1-1 now	Use the non-emergency line
Crime in progress · weapon · injury · immediate danger · fire/medical	Crime already over & no danger · cold theft report · suspicious vehicle parked but no activity · follow-up info

**Non-emergency:** add your agency's non-emergency number here before printing. | **Emergency:** 9-1-1. [add local non-emergency line](#)

## WHAT TO REPORT — THE NNWI ORDER

NNWI teaches a fixed order: **WHAT · WHEN · WHERE · WHO · HOW · WHY**. "*What, when, where and who are the first four things you need to know... how and why are very important, but many times you don't know these answers.*" Never withhold a report because you can't answer How or Why.

1. **What** is happening / what is needed (police, fire, paramedic).
2. **When** — now, or how long ago.
3. **Where** — specific address & direction of travel (use NOW-SEE, Week 5).
4. **Who** — quick suspect & vehicle description (the NNWI sentence, Week 5).
5. **How & Why** — if known; generalize and say so if you're unsure.

NNWI example: "*This is an emergency. Two people have just been wounded and the gunman has fled... a blue Dodge van, license 3-Adam-Boy-Charlie-555.*" Then WAIT for the operator's questions and follow instructions.

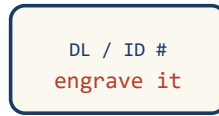
"As a Neighborhood Watch Participant, two jobs are involved. It is up to **you** to provide your local law-enforcement agency with your suspicions. It is up to **your law-enforcement agency** to investigate. You may occasionally be wrong, but your local law-enforcement agency will not be mad at you."

NNWI PARTICIPANTS HANDBOOK — REPORTING A CRIME

Stay on the line. Surfacing the pattern is the entire job — "**Unsure? Call 9-1-1. Don't hesitate.**"

## ACTIVITY

Scripted role-play: one volunteer is the caller, one the dispatcher; instructor scores for the WHAT-WHEN-WHERE-WHO order and calm, factual delivery.



LOCK IT • MARK IT • LIST IT

## OBJECTIVE

Turn the #1 your area crime — theft from unlocked cars and homes — into a non-event through layered prevention.

## TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**crimes of opportunity** Most theft requires no force — it requires an unlocked door. A large share of vehicle burglaries involve unlocked cars, and "leaving it open" is the single biggest preventable factor. Remove the opportunity and most of it disappears.

## THE THREE HABITS

- **Lock it** — every vehicle, every time, nothing visible inside; every door & window at home, even for "just a minute."
- **Mark it** — Operation I.D.: engrave a traceable number on valuables; photograph serial numbers. Marked property is harder to fence and easier to return.
- **List it** — keep the NNWI Inventory of Household Items (Appendix II). Critical for police recovery *and* insurance after a theft, fire, or quake.

## VOLUNTEER ROLE

Host an Operation I.D. etching table at a watch meeting or National Night Out; help neighbors complete their inventory sheets.

## ACTIVITY

Each volunteer completes one Inventory of Household Items page for their own home as the template they'll teach.

# 08 MODULE EIGHT Package & mail theft

NNWI: How to Observe · Reporting a Crime | Present-day your area focus



## OBJECTIVE

Cut "porch piracy" and mail theft by combining neighbor coordination with smart delivery habits.

## TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**opportunity theft** Porch piracy and mail theft track e-commerce volume and climb every holiday season — a textbook job for a watch network that already knows everyone's delivery schedule. (Mail theft is a federal crime.)

## PREVENTION

- Schedule deliveries for when someone's home; use parcel lockers, the workplace, or a neighbor on the telephone tree.
- A neighbor grabs your packages when you're out — and you grab theirs. That's the watch doing what it does.
- Lock or upgrade to a locking mailbox; collect mail daily; hold mail when traveling (ties to the vacation house check, Week 12).
- Doorbell/porch cameras: position to capture the walkway, not the neighbor's window.

## VOLUNTEER ROLE

Run a "package buddy" sign-up on each block; flag homes with piling mail during a vacation house check.

## ACTIVITY

Map your block's delivery blind spots; assign package buddies on the telephone tree.

# 09

MODULE NINE

## Vehicle & catalytic-converter theft

NNWI: Vehicle Identification • Operation I.D. | Present-day your area focus



CONVERTER – ETCH & SHIELD

### OBJECTIVE

Protect vehicles from the theft types that persist in your area neighborhoods.

### TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**still active** Vehicle theft and catalytic-converter theft surged nationally in 2020–2022 before easing, but high-value targets and quick 1–3 minute converter cuts persist. A converter cut sounds like a power saw at an odd hour — that's a Week-4 suspicious *sound*. Call it in.

### PREVENTION

- Park in a garage or a well-lit, visible spot; angle toward foot traffic.
- Etch the VIN or license number on the catalytic converter; consider a shield/cage.
- Nothing of value visible; take the garage-door remote out of cars parked in driveways.
- A converter cut takes 1–3 minutes and sounds like a power saw at an odd hour — that's a Week-4 suspicious *sound*. Call it in.

### VOLUNTEER ROLE

Partner with the Sheriff's Office on a converter-etching event; teach neighbors to recognize and report the cutting sound.

### ACTIVITY

Audio drill — recognize the sound profile of a converter theft vs. ordinary night noise; rehearse the non-emergency report.

# 10 MODULE TEN Fraud & scams

NNWI: Participant's Responsibilities | Present-day your area focus



GOVERNMENT DOESN'T CALL FOR GIFT CARDS

## OBJECTIVE

Equip volunteers to recognize the scams hitting your area residents — and to protect the seniors they check on through your welfare-check program.

## TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**billions lost a year** Impersonation scams — fake "deputy," "IRS," "utility," or "grandchild in trouble" calls demanding gift cards, wire transfers, or crypto — cost Americans billions annually (FTC), and older adults are disproportionately targeted. **No real agency or government office ever calls to demand payment that way.**

## THE RED FLAGS (TEACH EVERY RESIDENT)

- **Urgency + secrecy** — "act now, tell no one."
- **Unusual payment** — gift cards, wire transfer, crypto, cash by mail. No real agency ever asks for these.
- **Impersonation** — "deputy," "IRS," "utility," "your grandchild." Hang up and call the agency back on its published number.
- **A check you didn't expect** + a request to send money back = always fraud.

## VOLUNTEER ROLE

During welfare-check visits, ask isolated residents whether they've received calls like these. Coach them to hang up and call the agency or court back on its published number — no real agency asks for gift cards, reloadable cards, wire transfers, or crypto. Your visit may be the reality-check that stops a wire.

## ACTIVITY

Script practice: how to coach an at-risk neighbor to hang up, verify, and report — without shaming them.



23-ITEM BASIC KIT

water – 1 gal/person/day x3  
 3-day non-perishable food  
 first-aid kit + meds list  
 radio · flashlight · batteries

## OBJECTIVE

Extend the watch network into readiness — the same neighbors, the same map, a different emergency.

## DOCTRINE

"The best we can do... is to be as ready as possible when these events strike... then to help our officers by possibly serving as extra eyes and ears for them — without endangering ourselves."

NNWI EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK, INTRO

## THE TWO NNWI TOOLS

- **23-Item Basic Emergency Kit** — water (1 gal/person/day x3 days), 3-day food, first-aid kit + medications list, battery/NOAA radio, flashlight, whistle, dust masks & plastic sheeting, sanitation, documents, cash, local maps. Refresh every 6 months.
- **7 Ways to Safety** — out-of-town contact · meeting place · school/eldercare plan · workplace plan · insurance check · pet plan · **get informed, be informed, stay informed.**

## TODAY IN YOUR AREA

**know your hazards** Every community faces some mix of severe weather, fire, flood, earthquake, or prolonged power outage. Identify your area's top hazards, register for your local emergency-alert system, keep 3–5 days of supplies, and **never run a generator or grill indoors**. The special-needs roster (Week 2) becomes the evacuation buddy list: who needs a ride, who needs medication kept cool, who can't hear the alert.

## ACTIVITY

Build a block emergency plan: assign an out-of-town contact, a meeting place, and an evac buddy for every special-needs neighbor on the map.

# 12 MODULE TWELVE Putting it together & graduation

NNWI: Family Data Sheet · Participant's Responsibilities

CERTIFIED WATCH VOLUNTEER



## OBJECTIVE

Consolidate the program, assign standing roles, and launch volunteers into active service.

## CAPSTONE — THE VACATION HOUSE CHECK RUN

**vacation house check** The capstone duty ties every skill together: a resident files an away-notice; the volunteer runs scheduled checks looking for forced entry, accumulated mail/packages, open gates — observes (Wk 3), recognizes problems (Wk 4), describes accurately (Wk 5), and reports correctly (Wk 6). Each check is logged.

## STANDING ROLES ASSIGNED TODAY

- Block/Area Watch Captains named per cluster.
- your welfare-check program check-in roster set.
- Vacation house-check rotation built.
- Telephone trees activated and tested with a live drill.

## GRADUATION

Volunteers complete the Family Data Sheet, sign the final Code of Conduct acknowledgement, and receive a Neighborhood Watch Volunteer certificate. They are now active eyes and ears for their community.

**"WE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER."**

— THE WHOLE PROGRAM, IN FIVE WORDS.

## Program policies (coordinator's quick spine)

Policy	Standard
Eligibility	Resident or stakeholder of your area; background check per your agency policy; minimum age per agency rule.
Training prerequisite	Complete the 12-week program (or agency-approved equivalent) before unsupervised field duty.
Identification	Agency-issued ID/vest worn during all sanctioned activity; surrendered on separation.
Scope limits	Observe-and-report only. No enforcement, pursuit, detention, traffic direction into hazard, or weapons on duty.
Confidentiality	Resident data used only for the watch; never shared, sold, or posted. Violation = removal.
Non-discrimination	Observations based on behavior, never on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or housing status.
Hours & logging	All field activity logged (date, route, observations, reports made).
Incident reporting	Anything observed → your agency via 9-1-1 or the non-emergency line. Volunteer files an activity note.
Media / social	No case details, resident data, or imagery posted publicly. Press inquiries → your agency PIO.
Separation	Voluntary or for cause; ID and materials returned.

This is a doctrine-aligned starting spine. your agency risk management / county counsel should localize it before adoption.

review before use

## Forms & procedures (NNWI tool set)

These are the NNWI participant tools referenced throughout the 12 weeks. Each can be printed as a worksheet for volunteers and residents.

### FAMILY DATA SHEET

Per-household record: members, vehicles, emergency contacts, special needs, medical notes. The backbone of Know-Your-Neighbors and welfare checks.

### FAMILY DATA SUMMARY SHEET

Coordinator's one-line roll-up of every home on the block.

### TELEPHONE TREE

Tiered call list so an alert reaches the whole block in minutes.

### BLOCK MAP

Map of every home, marking occupants, vehicles, and special-needs residents.

### INVENTORY OF HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Operation I.D. log — item, make/model, serial, engraved number, photo. For recovery, insurance, and disaster claims.

### VACATION HOUSE CHECK REQUEST

Resident away-notice + the volunteer's check-log sheet.

### SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY / VEHICLE REPORT

Top-to-bottom person worksheet (the NNWI "She Simply Could Not..." sentence) + Kind/License/Color/Make/Year vehicle worksheet (Week 5).

### VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY LOG

Date, route, time, observations, reports made, hours.

## PROCEDURE — A WATCH REPORT, START TO FINISH

1. Observe from safety (Wk 3).
2. Decide: in-progress/danger → 9-1-1; cold/no-danger → non-emergency line (Wk 6).
3. Give the 5 W's + description (Wks 5–6).
4. Log it on the activity sheet.
5. If block-wide relevance → activate telephone tree.

## How this packet was built — and what else NNWI.ai can do

NNWI.ai is the technology service of the National Neighborhood Watch Institute. It helps law-enforcement agencies stand up and run community crime-prevention programs faster — without adding to a crime-prevention specialist's workload.

### CUSTOM SIGNAGE

Production Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch, and WARNING signs, personalized to your agency, jurisdiction, and non-emergency line — like the one on this cover. NNWI has been the original source of these sign families since 1972.

### TAILORED VOLUNTEER HANDBOOKS

Turnkey, doctrine-sourced 12-week academies built around your county's actual crime picture. This your area packet is one — produced through NNWI.ai.

### PROGRAM & OUTREACH RESOURCES

Forms, block-map and telephone-tree tools, Operation I.D. materials, and outreach pieces your volunteers can use on day one.

### SECURE BRIEFING TOOLS

Self-hosted, privacy-respecting tools for volunteer trainings and coordinator briefings — built so resident data never leaves your control.

The doctrine stays human. NNWI.ai speeds the production work — the artwork, the handbook, the forms — so your crime-prevention staff can spend their time with residents, not at a desk.

[NNWI.ORG](https://nnwi.org) • [NNWI.AI](https://nnwi.ai)

Want a packet like this for a neighboring jurisdiction, a Business Watch variant, or a Spanish-language edition? That's exactly what NNWI.ai is for — ask your NNWI contact, or scan the order page (next).

# Order Neighborhood Watch signs for your area

Reorder the Neighborhood Watch sign on this cover — or add Business Watch, street, and window decals for new watch groups. NNWI manufactures every sign to order.



Your community Neighborhood Watch sign  
— the artwork on file with NNWI

Item	Size	Qty
Neighborhood Watch sign — your design (aluminum)	18×24	_____
Neighborhood Watch street sign	12×18	_____
Business Watch sign	18×24	_____
Window / door decals (pack)	4×4	_____
Mounting hardware / post kit	—	_____

Ship to: \_\_\_\_\_

Attn / contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / email: \_\_\_\_\_

PO # (if any): \_\_\_\_\_



## SCAN TO ORDER ONLINE — YOUR COUPON IS BUILT IN

Scanning this code opens the NNWI online store ([nnwi.org/shop](https://nnwi.org/shop)) with your agency coupon **NEWWATCH** built into the link — enter it at checkout if it isn't applied automatically. Prefer to order by hand? Email or fax this sheet to your NNWI contact and mention code **NEWWATCH**.

<https://nnwi.org/shop/>

activate coupon before distribution

Questions on artwork, sizes, or quantities? [nnwi.org](https://nnwi.org) · [nnwi.ai](https://nnwi.ai) · (888) NNWI-USA / (888) 669-4872. NNWI is the original manufacturer of the Neighborhood Watch sign families.

## Sources

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### Doctrine (NNWI training materials)

- **NNWI Participants Handbook** (2009 edition, 56 pp.) — verbatim source for the 8 Benefits, How to Observe, the suspicious-activity & suspicious-sounds checklists, Suspect ID ("She Simply Could Not..." sentence), Vehicle ID, Phonetic Alphabet, NOW-SEE directions, Reporting / Calling 9-1-1 order, the Participant's Responsibilities, Family Data / Block Map / Telephone Tree doctrine, and the casebook incidents.
- **NNWI Emergency Preparedness Handbook** (54 pp.) — verbatim source for the "We Look Out For Each Other" doctrine, the 23-Item Basic Emergency Kit, the 7 Ways to Safety, and Operation I.D.

### Present-day your area context

- FBI Uniform Crime Reporting / NIBRS — national crime composition; theft-from-vehicle as the largest larceny category. [fbi.gov/cde](https://www.fbi.gov/cde)
- U.S. Federal Trade Commission — Consumer Sentinel / impersonation & elder-fraud loss reporting. [ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov) · [reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov)
- FEMA / Ready.gov — household emergency kit, family communication plan, and alert sign-up guidance. [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)
- National Neighborhood Watch / IACP — Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) duties. [nnw.org](https://www.nnw.org) · [theiacp.org](https://www.theiacp.org)
- **Localize before use:** replace the items above with your county / city crime data and your agency's program pages.

#### BUILD NOTE

SAMPLE v1.0 — generic edition for prospective agencies. Doctrine is **verbatim** from the NNWI Participants & Emergency Preparedness Handbooks; present-day items are national-level and should be localized to your jurisdiction.

**To customize this into an agency edition:** (1) drop in your agency name, jurisdiction, and non-emergency line; (2) replace the cover / Week-1 / order-form sign with your agency's NNWI sign artwork; (3) localize each "Today in your area" with your county's current crime data; (4) align Appendix I with your agency's policy; (5) create/activate a WooCommerce coupon for the order form.

**Artwork:** all diagrams are original SVG; the cover sign is a generic NNWI Neighborhood Watch design carrying no agency name or phone — your edition uses your real on-file sign.