



# C.O.P.P.S.

## Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving

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## Neighborhood Information Guide



### The COP Program

Community Oriented Policing (COP) is a detailed and vital element of law enforcement. Community policing has always been a part of law enforcement; however, the COP program was never formalized or instituted in a structured and universal format. In recent years, state and local police departments have established certain criteria that formalize the COP program with specific characteristics. Although a more distinct and documented form of community policing has been developed, each law enforcement community designates specific portions of the COP program that best fits the community's precise needs.

The COP program is a policing philosophy based on several key factors and beliefs. Community policing formulates a goal of providing disciplined and skilled policing services that directly reflect on the different community needs. The unique characteristic of the COP program, in recent years, is the commitment of every member in the police department to work, cooperate, and solve problems with the associated community.

Job enrichment is the primary magnetism for interest in police work. Police work is a career that allows an individual to directly make a difference in a community. The recent structured style of the COP program allows officers to cooperate with the community and accomplish goals together. The development of the COP program in law enforcement agencies has increased job satisfaction, which results in an increased morale and improved productivity. The COP program allows officers the opportunity to recognize a problem with the community, cooperate with the community regarding the problem, and focus on the problem with the support of the community until it is solved.

The COP program possesses the opportunity to develop a positive public perception of the police. It is clear there is a lack of trust towards the police with some minority groups. The COP program provides the police the ideal opportunity to earn trust from the community and build a mutually respectful relationship.

The COP program allows the citizens to come in contact and work directly with officers involved in the COP program. The advantage to responding and offering services to certain non-policing or minor issues is that police involvement will avoid some future criminal incidents that often stem from non-policing or minor issues.

## **A Commitment to Improvement**

The greatest achievement that can be accomplished through the COP program is improved police/community relations. The COP program requires trust, cooperation, and commitment from both the police and the community. It is critical the citizens in a community understand the position of the police. To the same extent, it is important the police understand the position of the citizens in the community they serve.

Community policing has always existed in law enforcement. One of the most basic elements of law enforcement is responding to citizen concerns with the intention of diminishing their concerns or assisting in resolving the problem. Today's law enforcement community is focusing on broadening their services by offering more than simply a response for assistance. The COP program allows patrol officers to utilize innovative ways to maximize problem solving with the aid of the community.

The COP program expands standard police work and develops an improved relationship with the community. By developing trust, cooperation, and increasing community resources, the Community Oriented Policing (COP) program becomes a success for the community, as well as, the law enforcement agency.

## **Police/Community Relations via Neighborhood Watch**



## **Preventing Crime & Neighborhood Watch**

It is a well-established fact that a neighborhood's best crime prevention tool is a good neighbor. No one other than the person who lives in a particular area is better equipped to identify unfamiliar sights, sounds, and people. Every street has a unique pattern of activity that depends on elements such as the hours people work, the routes they travel, the cars they drive, the places their children play, their shopping habits, the amount of

through traffic, and the type and frequency of visitors. When there is a deviation from this normal rhythm, a good neighbor will take notice and also take action.

The Neighborhood Watch Program relies on an organized effort between residents and law enforcement. The objective of such teamwork is to reduce and prevent criminal activity. Training and information is available free of charge from you local law enforcement agency and stresses the importance of neighbors getting to know each other and establishing a supportive network.

Additionally, Neighborhood Watch representatives provide practical advice regarding personal and home security, focusing on subjects such as door and window locks, lighting systems, alarms, and firearm safety.

### **To Start a Neighborhood Watch Program:**

1. Canvas your neighborhood by phone or flyer to determine interest and common concerns.
2. Contact the local law enforcement crime prevention division and schedule a meeting with a Neighborhood Watch group coordinator.
3. Choose a meeting site and notify neighbors of the time and place.
4. Make known to the coordinator your specific problems, concerns and your goals for this particular Neighborhood Watch Group.
5. At the meeting, collect names, addresses and phone numbers.
6. Distribute crime prevention materials to be shared with those who were unable to attend.
7. Schedule your next meeting.



### **To Organize a Telephone Tree:**

1. Beginning with your neighborhood chairperson or block captain, select a cluster of four neighbors to contact. Assign to each of those individuals four more neighbors, and so on, until all neighborhood members are included.
2. Distribute copies of the Neighborhood Telephone Tree (NTT) to those whose names and phone numbers are included.
3. Residents, who wish to alert their neighborhood regarding a concern, an event, or to impart information, are advised to first call the neighborhood chairperson or block captain to activate the NTT.

#### **Tips:**

- Keep the calls quick and non-social.
- Include an emergency phone number for times when no one is at home.
- Change assignments periodically to foster familiarity.

## **Organize an email group**

As a supplement to a telephone tree, consider establishing an email group. This group should consist solely of members of the Neighborhood Watch Group and is to be used only to disseminate information regarding neighborhood concerns. The chairperson or block captain should gather valid email addresses from members of the group and establish a mass email list. Remember to always include your community policing officer in the email group; it is important that they be involved in the daily activities and discussions of the group. The chairperson or block captain should do his/her best to keep an updated list of email addresses and coordinate with police to post appropriate, relevant information.

### **Caution:**

It is sometimes advisable for neighbors to initiate a Neighborhood Watch Program by contacting only those area residents with whom they have a trusted history. Sadly, enterprising criminals have been known to utilize the openness of such efforts to assess and gain access to others property.

### **Remember:**

Neighborhood Watch is neither a vigilante organization nor a substitute for the Police. Rather, to the benefit of your neighbors and local law enforcement, an active Neighborhood Watch Program acts as the collective eyes and ears of your community. By being alert, caring and responsive, you can not only protect the safety and welfare of yourself and others, but also reduce and prevent the growth of blight and crime where you live. Your earnest involvement is as valuable a gift to your own well being as it is to others.

**\*Contact Paul Roman at (510) 675-5650 to purchase Neighborhood Watch signs. The signs are \$39 each.**



**What is Suspicious?**

Someone who:

- Seems out of place
- Solicits without a license of ID
- Wanders without purpose
- Asks for a nonexistent or past resident
- Runs from a car or building
- Looks into house and car windows
- Conducts transactions from a vehicle
- Carries property on foot at an unusual hour
- Offers merchandise at an exceptionally low price
- Approaches to enter a home that appears to be unoccupied

Vehicles that:

- Are parked and occupied
- Move slowly with no apparent destination
- Have no lights on at night
- Make several trips in a short period of time
- Stop to attract a child's attention

The sound of:

- Items being removed from closed businesses or unoccupied residences
- A child resisting the advances of an adult
- People tampering with vehicles or mail boxes
- Excessive foot and vehicle traffic to and from a single dwelling



If you have information that a specific person or address is involved in criminal activity, and you wish to report the incident but remain anonymous the UCPD has an anonymous tip line set up. Please call (510) 675-5207 or email [tips@unioncity.org](mailto:tips@unioncity.org) and you can leave

the information in the voicemail box. This voicemail is checked by the UCPD Investigations Division and UCPD COPPS Unit.

The COPPS unit encourages you to provide as much information about the criminal activity as possible (times, specific location, days of the week, description of involved parties and/or vehicles) and at least leave a call back number so a COPPS officer can contact you if they need more information.



### **To Report a Non-Emergency of Suspicious Activity:**

For any situation not occurring nor requiring immediate police attention, call the Union City Police Department's **non-emergency** number **(510) 471-1365** and provide:

- Date
- Time
- Location of the incident
- Description of people, vehicles, and activities

### **Tips:**

- Do not be embarrassed or afraid to call
- Record the observation in a personal log for future reference
- Include small details like a tattoo, scar, limp, or jewelry



### **To Report an Emergency:**

Call 911 for any situation that just happened or is happening now and requires immediate medical or police attention, such as a:

- Beating, stabbing, or shooting
- Burglary or robbery in progress
- Prowler or uninvited intruder
- Burning fire
- Police officer in distress
- Life-threatening or extreme accident, illness, or injury
- Or any other crime in progress

- **When You Call 911:**

Be prepared to provide the following information:

1. WHAT is the emergency?
  - Is the emergency still happening?
  - Is anyone hurt?
2. WHERE is the emergency?
  - The building number and street address
  - Relation to a major cross street
  - Location on property of involved people
3. WHO is involved?
  - Give your name and location (optional)
  - Name and describe people involved
  - Your relation to the emergency
4. WHEN did the emergency occur?

*To report something that is a LIFE THREATENING emergency in UNION CITY from a cellular telephone, you can program (510) 471-1441 into your cellular telephone for Union City 911. You will bypass calling into the general CHP 911 dispatch center in Vallejo.*

***REMEMBER IF YOU PROGRAM THIS NUMBER INTO YOUR CELLULAR TELEPHONE, IT ONLY APPLIES TO UNION CITY 911 AND EMERGENCIES IN THE CITY OF UNION CITY.***

***IF YOU ARE OUT OF UNION CITY, YOU WILL HAVE TO CALL 911***

### **A Crime in Progress:**

You may be asked to stay on the phone to update authorities regarding:

- Number and description of people involved
- Number and type of weapons
- License plate, color, make, and model of involved vehicles
- Direction of vehicle or suspect last seen traveling

### **Tips:**

Description of people should include:

- Sex
- Race
- Approximate age
- Approximate height and weight
- Hair color and style

- Type and color of clothing
- Distinguishing marks (tattoos, scars, deformities, etc.)



## **Home Alarms/ Home Security**

The largest deterrent to residential crime is the installation of an alarm system. The police department cannot recommend any specific alarm company; consumer research and contracting with a well known, established, and professional alarm company is imperative. Contact the Better Business Bureau (BBB) regarding the past history of any alarm company prior to installation.

### **Union City Alarm Ordinance**

#### **9.48.055 Registration for and renewal of alarm system permits.**

A. All alarm users shall obtain a permit from the Police Department to operate or maintain their alarm system. In order to register for a permit to operate or maintain an alarm system, all alarm users must provide the Police Department with the following:

1. The name, address, and phone number of the alarm user.
2. The name, address, and phone number of the alarm system business or agent;
3. The name, address, and phone number of at least one other person responsible to respond to the alarm site.

B. All alarm users shall renew the permit to operate or maintain the alarm system on an annual basis with the Police Department. The alarm user shall, where applicable, provide updated information as required by subsection A of this section.

C. All alarm users shall pay an alarm system registration fee, and an annual renewal fee, as set forth in the fee schedule adopted by the City.

D. If an alarm user fails to obtain and/or renew the permit to operate or maintain the alarm system, the Department Chief, after the alarm user has been notified by first class mail that the alarm system has not been registered or the permit renewed, may authorize that the alarm user's site be put on a "no response" status. (Ord. 606-03 § 1, 2003)

- *The alarm registration fee is \$39, and the annual renewal fee is \$17*
- *The alarm permit applications can be obtained at the Union City Police Department.*

### **False Alarms**

The Union City alarm ordinance (**9.48.090 Union City Municipal Code: False alarms**) encourages accountability and responsibility of the users by charging home/business owners for false alarms. No alarm user is perfect, to that end; two (2) false alarms in a 12 month period (beginning with the first false alarm received) would be allowed without a penalty assessed. However, after two false alarms, a fee of **\$60** per false alarm response may be assessed against the home/business owner, with a sixth false alarming resulting in the business/residence being placed on a none-response status.

### **Unregistered Alarms**

Alarms that are not registered with the city could be placed on a non-response status until the alarm has been registered and a permit obtained. A non-response status means that police will not respond to the alarm. Alarm owners may continue to appeal fees and a non-response status. A non-response status would continue to apply to users who fail to pay false alarm fines within the established period.

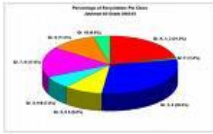
### **Exterior Motion Sensors**

Exterior motion sensors serve as a significant crime preventative strategy. Motion sensor lights may be installed in the front, rear, and side yards. For the front yard, aesthetically appealing lights are available and effective. For the rear yard and dual flood motion light is recommended. The dual flood offers a 180-degree coverage zone and will alert resident of any unwanted intruders during the evening hours. Typically, one dual motion flood is sufficient; however depending on the rear perimeter of the house and the foliage, an additional dual motion light may be added. The purpose of the motion light is to provide plenty of light to any entry/exit points around the entire perimeter of your residence. \*\*\*\*Remember\*\*\*\* the motion sensor lights are mainly effective in a yard where the perimeter plants, trees, bushes, etc. allow light coverage.

## Locking Mailboxes

Stolen mail often leads to identity thefts. To protect incoming US Mail, replacing a standard curbside mailbox with a locking mailbox, available at most local hardware stores and online, is a practical and effective method. The police department urges residents NOT to place outgoing mail (especially envelopes with checks or mail orders enclosed) in a personal mailbox and recommend transporting the item(s) to the Post Office or at least to a locked mail pick-up box

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS



### Union City PD Annual Reports and Crime Stats:

The City of Union City provides factual data on reported crime within the city. The statistics are available on the Union City Police Dept. website ([http://www.unioncity.org/police/crime\\_stats.htm](http://www.unioncity.org/police/crime_stats.htm))

The City of Union City also provides selected crimes to be reported on [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com). This website is kept up to date and can be accessed on a daily basis to view criminal activity (burglary/thefts/robberies/selected registered sex offenders) in your neighborhood.



## Traffic Concerns

Traffic Sergeant Sato handles most traffic concerns. Sergeant Sato can be reached at (510) 675-5221 or [deans@unioncity.org](mailto:deans@unioncity.org). When you contact Sergeant Sato, please include your name, phone number, detailed description of your concern (location, types of violation i.e. speeding, stop sign violations) so he can better prepare a plan to address the issue.

## **Seeking Neighborhood Watch Signs, Additional Street Signs, Lane Dividers, Etc**

The contact person for street signs is Paul Roman. Contact Mr. Roman if you would like to suggest adding street signs, speed bumps, painted lane dividers, etc. Mr. Roman can be reached at **(510) 675-5650**.

## **Parking Concerns and Abandoned Vehicles**

Community Service Aide (CSA) Jerry Martinez handles parking and abandoned vehicle concerns. CSA Martinez can be reached at **(510) 675-5247** or [jerrym@unioncity.org](mailto:jerrym@unioncity.org). Please be patient, CSA Martinez is extremely busy.



## **Abandoned Shopping Carts**

To report an abandoned shopping cart on the street or sidewalk, please call **(510) 675-5308**.

Please be prepared to report the location of the shopping carts (street address nearest cross streets)

**\*\*The unauthorized removal of a shopping cart from a store parking lot is a violation of State law. (California Business and Professions Code, Section 22435).**

## **Maintenance of Roads, Parks etc.**

Public Works Superintendent Rick Sealana is in charge of street maintenance. He can be reached at **(510) 675-5337** or [rsealana@ci.union-city.ca.us](mailto:rsealana@ci.union-city.ca.us)

## **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

Initiated in May 2001, The Alameda County Fire Department's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program was developed to create a well-trained civilian emergency work force. These teams are vital for disaster situations when the number and scope of incidents clearly overwhelm conventional emergency services.

CERT training provides community self-sufficiency through the development of multi-functional response teams that can act as an adjunct to local emergency services during major disasters. Empowered by this unique training, people from community organizations, businesses, industry, and City employees can assemble as a CERT, or perform as individual leaders to direct untrained volunteers in the initial phase of a disaster.

CERT members receive 20 hours of initial training in subjects including earthquake awareness, hazard mitigation, utility control, disaster fire suppression techniques and disaster medical operations. The class teaches light search and rescue, hazardous materials recognition. The training culminates with a disaster simulation and comprehensive course review. All training is conducted in a congenial atmosphere by active-duty career Firefighters with expertise in disaster management.

If you are interested in becoming a CERT member, email or call the number listed below. Please include your name, phone number, address for all interested parties and the number of people interested in participating.

**Fire Department Administration**  
**34009 Alvarado-Niles Road**  
**Union City, California 94587**  
**Telephone (510) 675-5470**  
**Fax (510) 487-2117**  
[InfoUCFD@ci.union-city.ca.us](mailto:InfoUCFD@ci.union-city.ca.us)

## **Neighborhood Preservations Program**



**Kevin Reese, Coordinator**  
(510) 675-5314/ [kreese@unioncity.org](mailto:kreese@unioncity.org)

**Lorena Gonzalez, Administrative Contact**  
(510) 675-5315/ [lgonzalez@unioncity.org](mailto:lgonzalez@unioncity.org)

The Neighborhood Preservation Program of the City of Union City Economic and Community Development Department assists in enforcing the City of Union City

Municipal Code as it applies to property maintenance, property nuisances and other issues in residential and commercial zoning districts.

The Neighborhood Preservation staff works closely with all City departments (Police, Fire) in order to resolve health, safety, and public nuisance problems that may adversely affect the quality of life for citizens of Union City. The Program focuses on public education as the primary measure to gain voluntary compliance with the Union City Municipal Code and steers abatement measures through coordinated and cooperative measures. Over 90 percent of all reported problems are resolved on the initial contact by Neighborhood Preservation Officers. Administrative penalties may be assessed to those who fail to comply with the municipal code.

You can report all non life-threatening violations, hazards, or nuisances in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email.

Some of the types of problems that we can address are:

- Auto Repairs
- Businesses Operating in Inappropriate Locations or without Permits
- Dangerous Swimming Pools
- Fence Height and Locations
- Illegal or Non-permitted Land Uses
- Structures Built without Permits
- Unsafe or Unsanitary Housing
- And many more...

The Neighborhood Preservation Programs is staffed by one Neighborhood Preservation Specialist and one Administrative Assistant, who are committed to upholding and enforcing community standards. These staff members work to resolve issues that are in conflict with the Union City Municipal Code.

You can help enhance the quality of life in Union City by reporting public nuisances, such as unsafe buildings, substandard dwellings, excessive or improper sign displays, or residential auto repairs.

If you would rather report the issue by other means, please contact our Neighborhood Preservation/Code Enforcement office Monday through Friday (8am - 6pm) at 510-675-5313.

When you make a report, the exact address where the suspected violation is occurring is extremely important. In addition, reporting more information about the complaint helps to provide a clearer picture of the nature of the violation.