Why do apartment residents need a crime watch?

- Predators enjoy relative anonymity due to large numbers of people coming and going.
- Residency is usually short-term, and tenants develop no real sense of responsibility for the property.
- Residents in gated communities can develop a false sense of security. Carelessness abounds.
- Residents often leave security issues to others, not wanting to get involved.
- Criminals who feel unthreatened will come back for more.

What can residents do to take control of their communities?

- Organize and utilize an Apartment Crime Watch program.
- Criminals like to blend in, but they should feel threatened, surrounded by so many windows, balconies, doors, and eyes.
- If residents do not take control, the criminals will! Be protective. It is YOUR HOME!
- Challenge suspicious behavior by watching and reporting to police.
- Look and listen out windows.
- Sit on your balcony and be seen.
- ➢ Be territorial! It is your <u>home</u>!
- When away, make your unit look and sound occupied.
- Guests should respect the residents, the property, and behave responsibly.
- Call police <u>first</u> to report crimes in progress, crimes already committed, or breaches of the peace.
- Inform your property manager of any incidents the next business day.

As an apartment or condominium tenant, your home territory includes more than just your individual unit. All share a vested interest in keeping the community property safe. Parking lots, playgrounds, pools, laundromats, mailboxes, and common areas are the responsibility of each and every tenant. The safety of a community is totally dependent upon the direct involvement of its residents.



What if I am afraid to call the police?

- A caller can choose to remain anonymous. But, remain on the line and provide any other important information relevant to the call.
- You may request the responding officer NOT contact you in person, but YOU must initiate that request (otherwise, our officers are required to contact you).
- An officer can also contact you by phone, if you prefer.

To report a crime in progress or a suspicious person to the Richardson Police Department -



For non-emergencies call (972)744-4800



If YOU do not call—who will? YOUR COMMUNITY IS ONLY AS SAFE AS <u>YOU</u> MAKE IT.

Some safety tips---

- Do not leave property inside your vehicle. Remove stereo faceplates.
- Be cautious during night hours (9PM – 6 AM). If possible, phone ahead so a roommate can watch out for you.
- Look around before you park. Be wary of loitering behavior.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash, especially at night.
- Lock and chain bicycles and scooters stored on balconies and patios.
- "Piggybackers" are waiting for a chance to get into gated communities. Make certain the gate closes behind you.
- Use simple secondary locks on your windows and balcony doors, but nothing which might hinder escape during a fire.
- A tight fitting dowel or metal rod placed in the sliding door channel can secure that door. Screws along the upper channel prevent lifting the door out of its track.
 - Make a habit of locking your doors (even if you are inside) but especially if you leave your unit even for just a few minutes.

- Keep landscape trimmed below window level and from around doors, porches, landings, etc.
- Trees should be trimmed up and bushes trimmed down to maximize visibility.
- Report burned out lights and dark areas in need of lighting improvements.
- Use a peephole or window to identify door knockers.
- Record serial numbers or engrave your TX driver license number on valuables.
- Socialize with your building neighbors. Watch out for one another.
- Stay alert to your surroundings and trust your instincts.
- Most property crimes are crimes of opportunity.

RICHARDSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Crime Watch for Multi-Family Communities