

How to Start a Good Neighbor Project

www.cityofmadison.com/police/community/Good-Neighbor-Project/



What is the Good Neighbor Project?

The Good Neighbor Project is the Madison Police Department's community safety program.

Why should I belong to a Good Neighbor Project (GNP)?

When we take the time to get to know our neighbors, we feel a stronger sense of community. It's comforting to know we have neighbors who are looking out for us and will help us. The police officers who live and work in our neighborhoods also care about our safety and well-being. When we get to know our neighborhood officers and work together with them to solve problems, we create an even larger social support network where everyone feels surrounded by people who care.

Who can start a Good Neighbor Project?

Anyone! A Good Neighbor Project can be as simple as you and your across-the-street neighbor agreeing to text each other if one of you forgets to close your garage door in the evening (Garage Buddy!). Or maybe your GNP is a small group of neighbors who meets regularly at a local coffee shop to talk about safety and other neighborhood issues.



If you live in a neighborhood full of busy families, your GNP may simply be a group of neighbors who has decided to share information through a listserv or a social media group. Or maybe your GNP is a large network of neighbors who shares safety information but who also gets together occasionally to learn something, have fun or work together on a neighborhood or charity project (block party, food drive, fun run, rummage sale, chili cook-off, etc.).

A Good Neighbor Project is whatever works best for you and your neighbors!

How can we make our Good Neighbor Project a success?

Get to know your nearby neighbors:



- **Practice the Nine House Model***: In residential areas each homeowner or renter should try to get to know the neighbors in the three homes behind them, the three homes across the street from them and the neighbors on either side (**if you live in a condo or apartment building you can adjust the numbers*). The idea is to get to know some of the neighbors who live closest to you and then you can share contact information with each other in case any needs or emergencies arise.

Your immediate neighbors are your first responders. They may be first to notice a crime in progress, a fire, burst water pipes, a pet that has wandered away or someone who hasn't picked up their mail or newspapers in several days and needs medical attention.

If your home or apartment was broken into or if it suffered flood, fire or storm damage would your neighbors know how to contact you? Choose what information you feel comfortable sharing with your immediate neighbors like phone numbers, email addresses or emergency contact information. You may also choose to share the names of the adults who live in your residence, any pets you have or whether anyone in your family has a notable health issue.

Reach out to even more people in your neighborhood:

- **Host a neighborhood meeting to attract a larger group:**
 - **Invite an officer from the Madison Police Department to speak to a gathering:** Invite the police chief, your MPD district captain or an MPD neighborhood officer. They can address neighborhood concerns and answer questions. Call your MPD district police station for help scheduling a speaker: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Police/districts/index.cfm>
 - **Invite a speaker who can teach neighbors about personal safety or crime prevention:** Invite an MPD burglary crimes detective to talk about property crime prevention, or the Dane County 911 Operations Manager to teach neighbors when and how to report emergencies, or a speaker from the WI Better Business Bureau or DATCP to talk about how to avoid scams, frauds, ID theft. Or you can learn more about the Madison Police Department by inviting personnel from MPD specialized Units like Gangs, Mental Health, Drones, Madison Addiction Recovery Initiative, K9s, Mounted Patrol, etc.
 - **Invite a general interest speaker to attract a wide audience** and then tell everyone about your Good Neighbor Project.
- **Use Nextdoor or a neighborhood Facebook page to invite neighbors to participate in a project** to make a city street or park safer. You can work with MPD and the city to address issues like speeding or ask for help improving the lighting or changing the design of a park to discourage crime.



- **Reserve the MPD's Neighborhood Resource Trailer for a neighborhood event:** Any community group can reserve the trailer which includes a grill, table and chairs, a serving platform as well as a microphone and speaker and a dry erase board.
- **Start a common interest group (knitting or board game group, book club, sports team, mom's group, etc.)** to get to know more of your neighbors and then invite them to be part of your Good Neighbor Project.

- **Schedule a tour with a group of your neighbors:** Tours allow you and your neighbors to get to know each other better while learning more about your community. You can take a tour of your MPD district station, the Dane County 911 Operations Center, the MPD Training Center or even the Dane County Jail. You can also schedule general interest tours like the Epic Systems campus or the 115th Fighter Wing at Truax Field. Local TV stations also offer fun tours of their facilities and you can usually watch a live TV broadcast.



How should my Good Neighbor Project communicate?

Regular communication and interaction with neighbors is key to a successful Good Neighbor Project

- **Use an email list:** An email list works well for small or medium-sized groups. If you have a large group and your neighborhood has an established neighborhood association website you may be able to use the same web host for a large email list, or even have your own separate webpage.
- **Start a Google Group:** Several west side safety groups and GNPs communicate via a Google Group. Emails are generated when neighbors post information. Some focus only on safety, but others use the group as a community bulletin board in addition to discussing safety:
<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!overview>
- **Connect on Nextdoor:** Nextdoor requires a proof of address to join. It's a good place for letting neighbors know about meetings and events or sharing general information. No moderator is needed:
<https://nextdoor.com/>
- **Create a closed Facebook Group:** Facebook groups are easy to set up. You'll need a moderator(s) and you'll want to establish guidelines for posting: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/>

How can our group get to know and work with our Madison Police officers?

- **Contact your police district and ask them to put you in touch with your neighborhood or liaison patrol officer.** This officer serves your immediate area and is available to answer your questions and address your specific neighborhood concerns:
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/Police/districts/index.cfm>



- **Attend a Coffee with a Cop gathering** where you can chat informally with police officers and community members:
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/images/CoffeeWithACop.jpg>
- **Invite a Madison Police officer or detective to speak to your GNP or neighborhood group.** Call your district for help:
<https://www.cityofmadison.com/Police/districts/index.cfm>



- **Host a Fireside Five-Oh Chat.** Invite 8 to 14 of your friends and neighbors to your home or backyard to participate in an informal social hour with Madison Police officers. Ask whatever questions you want. They'll even bring the treats!
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/community/fireside/>
- **Participate in a police ride-along.** Learn first-hand what Madison Police officers do on the job by accompanying an officer during his or her shift. You can sign up here:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/police/documents/RidealongAppPkt.pdf>

Where can we get crime and safety information to share with our group?

- **Use the Community Crime Map:** Madison Police and other local police departments funnel their police incidents into this online public map: <https://communitycrimemap.com/>
- **Visit the MPD's Incident Reports page** to learn about noteworthy incidents:
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/newsroom/incidentreports/>
- **Sign up to receive a daily email containing the Police Chief's list of significant calls**, or you can view them on the blog: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/chief/blog/>
- **Visit the MPD Blotter** where districts report crime statistics, make community announcements and offer safety tips: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/blog/>
- **Follow MPD social media accounts:**
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MadisonPolice/>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/madisonpolice>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/madisonwipolice/>

Here are some additional safety/crime-prevention resources:

- **Madison Police Department Crime Prevention page:**
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/safety/crimeprevention/>
- **Madison Area Crime Stoppers on Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/MadisonAreaCrimeStoppers/>
- **Dane County Crime Awareness and Education Facebook group:**
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2129907217323844/>
- **Madison Safety on Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/madisonsafety>

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