



NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION



Safe communities begin with **well-organized and prepared** neighborhoods. Oakland residents are highly encouraged to create their own organized neighborhoods to address areas of local concern, to prepare for emergencies, and to build stronger and better-connected communities.

Why Organize Your Neighborhood?

Organizing (or re-organizing) your neighborhood group will result in improved safety, beauty and overall quality of life. It will help to overcome the effects of limited City resources.

An organized neighborhood can address issues of greatest interest or concern, including:

- ◆ Preparing for and responding to natural disasters and emergencies
- ◆ Deterring crime
- ◆ Improving parking and traffic safety in your immediate area
- ◆ Cleaning up and beautifying the neighborhood and making it more wildfire safe
- ◆ Socializing and building a stronger sense of community
- ◆ Looking out for one another

What Does an Organized Neighborhood Look Like?

An organized neighborhood typically covers a block or two of connected streets (some are larger), or perhaps all the units in an apartment building. The organized neighborhood has one or preferably several leaders/coordinators/Block Captains, keeps an updated and secure roster with resident's contact info and holds regular events during the year.

These neighborhood events can include:

- ❖ Informal social gatherings to welcome new neighbors
- ❖ Holiday parties
- ❖ Firewise USA® wildfire safety efforts
- ❖ National Night Out
- ❖ Neighborhood Watch crime prevention training
- ❖ Emergency preparedness (CORE/CERT) training and drills



Many Oakland communities are very well organized and have been for many years, and are willing to serve as model groups for newly organized neighborhoods. **The OCP&R team can help coordinate this assistance. Please contact us.**

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

GETTING STARTED

Organizing a neighborhood requires a few neighbors to get the ball rolling. Initial, proven steps include:



Form a small start-up team of engaged neighbors



Determine appropriate boundaries and the home addresses to be part of your group



Compile a roster of neighbor's contact information (usually restricted to the team)



Determine how best to communicate: email, text, Nextdoor sub-group, etc.



Hold a social event for the neighborhood to introduce the why and how of organizing



Engage more neighbors to help out with social events



Break tasks into small activities doable for people with busy lives



MOST OF ALL, WELCOME EVERYONE AND HAVE FUN!

KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING

Don't be discouraged if participation is not what you expected. Some folks just may not share your enthusiasm for a stronger community. **If you get half of your households engaged at least once a year, you're on the road to success.** Be sure to welcome new residents into the fold and to tap into their energy and desire to connect with their new neighbors.

Rotate duties and responsibilities to avoid burn-out among your core team. Mix up activities and ensure each event includes time to socialize and have fun. Revisit why your neighborhood organized in the first place and keep neighbors informed of accomplishments.

Organized neighborhoods are the foundation for residents being able to best prepare for and respond to a disaster.

OCP&R is a program of the Oakland Firesafe Council.

Contact OCP&R for more information and assistance in organizing your neighborhood.

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU ORGANIZE

There are many resources available to help organize your neighborhood. A comprehensive organization and leader's guide is available through **OCP&R**. A skills ladder is included that suggests levels a neighborhood can progress through as it organizes. Programs such as **Firewise USA®** and **Neighborhood Watch** provide steps to help a neighborhood be more wildfire- and crime-safe.

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OAKLAND COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

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