



Pinecrest Neighborhood Watch

July 2009

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Introducing our neighborhood watch

In January of 2009, it was decided to start a neighborhood watch program for the Pinecrest Subdivision. Athens' burglaries are up and a neighborhood watch program is proven to deter break-ins.

The Neighborhood watch signs have been ordered and should be up at both the front and back entrance to the subdivision by the beginning of August.

We have decided to routinely send emails updating the neighborhood of any crimes that occur and any information that we get from the police department.

We will also be sending out periodic newsletters which will feature tips and information to help deter crime. They will also update you on the steps that the police department is taking to prevent burglaries.

To join the neighborhood watch, please send an email to PineCrestNeighborhoodWatch@gmail.com with your name, address, and phone number.



What's with this email address?

We feel that the email address PineCrestNeighborhoodWatch@gmail.com can be a utility for many things. Email is a great way for the community to stay in contact if something bad were to happen or when we have information to give out. We plan to use it to send out any important information regarding crimes in our community. We will also use it to disseminate any new recommendations or information that the police department gives us regarding crimes in the area.

Please send any recommendations or questions that you might have about the neighborhood watch program. And remember to send your name, address, and phone number to be added to the email chain!

PineCrestNeighborhoodWatch@gmail.com

Is Athens' crime really that bad?

When compared to a big city, Athens has pretty average crime rates. However since we live in a college town we do see increased numbers of burglaries.

When compared to the national average, burglary in Athens is 1.21 times higher and other forms of property crimes are 1.32 times higher. Violent crimes though, is well below the national average.

It is very important that we take steps to prevent our neighborhood from experiencing any type of crime. The neighborhood watch is only the first step. It pays to be aware of the crime rates and to take the appropriate steps to prevent ourselves from becoming a victim of crime.

2007 Crime Statistics in Athens-Clarke County	
Crime	# Reported
Murder	7
Forcible Rape	39
Robbery	142
Assault	254
Vehicle Theft	360
Burglary	1326
Larceny	4230

What do I do if a crime happens in my house?

Obviously, if a crime happens in your home it is a horrible situation. Once you have everything handled with the authorities and your insurance, it is important to make the rest of the community aware of the crime.

It is also important that you report the experience so that others in the community can be informed of any problems or issued that you had during the entire process. To make it easy for you, you can email the neighborhood watch at PineCrestNeighborhoodWatch@gmail.com or if you would like to discuss the experience please call Mike or Erin Smyrniotis at 706-355-3828.

Steps to take:

- 1) Call the police. The emergency number is of course 911. The Athens police non-emergency number is 706-613-3345.
- 2) After reporting the crime and the authorities have left, call your insurance company to make your initial report (if needed).
- 3) Notify the Pinecrest Neighborhood Watch Program.

Any Suggestions?

Mike and Erin Smyrniotis have volunteered to run the neighborhood watch program. We have lived at 132 Tall Pine Lane in Pinecrest for almost two years.

Anyone that would like to be more involved in the neighborhood watch program can contact us at 706-355-3828 or by emailing PineCrestNeighborhoodWatch@gmail.com.

We would love to hear your suggestions for the program and any ideas that you have for future newsletters. We look forward to hearing from you!

Check out the Pinecrest webpage at
<http://www.pinecrestathens.org>

9 tips for preventing burglary...

1. Get to know your neighbors. Exchange names, phone numbers, and other information that makes your neighborhood become closer as friends and neighbors.
2. Leave a light on or use a timer for your lights if you will be away for a full day or longer.
3. Have the post office hold your mail and put your newspapers on vacation hold while you are away. As an alternative, ask one of your neighbors to bring in your mail and newspapers and keep them for you until you return.
4. Consider installing a security system. These systems are more common now and fairly inexpensive to put in. The companies usually require you to sign a two year agreement.
5. Walk on your street regularly. Get to know which cars belong with a particular house. Meet neighbors that you have never talked to before.
6. Write down the license plate numbers and descriptions of strange vehicles and their occupants. Make a note of the day and time the vehicle was parked on your street.
7. Do not discuss private details with anyone who comes to your door trying to sell something or wanting information. Tell them to leave their card or other contact information on your front steps or porch and do not open the door until long after they have gone.
8. Do not leave mail in your mail box to be picked up later. Take it to the post office or hand it personally to the carrier.
9. Watch out for your neighbors. If you see someone or something that doesn't seem right take a closer look.

4 proactive steps for insurance...

- 1) Make sure that you have the proper limits on your homeowners/renter insurance policy. Some people make the mistake of renewing their policies year to year without discussing with their insurance agency changes that have occurred over the year. Make sure that when you buy a new big-ticket item to let your insurance company know. Also some items such as electronics and jewelry require an endorsement to existing coverage and are not covered under a simple homeowners/renters policy. Also check with your place of employment on the type of insurance you have on any office equipment that you bring home.
- 2) Make a inventory of all of your items that would be covered under your insurance that you would want to recover in case of a burglary. Make sure to list all electronics, jewelry, china, crystal and any other item of value. A good idea is to list anything new as you purchase it. Also make sure to take pictures of everything. Keep a list on the computer but also store a copy in a safe deposit box. This is important not only for burglary but in case of a fire.
- 3) Mark everything with an identifier of some sort. Make sure that you scratch or etch something into the back of all big ticket items. This could help you get them back if the items are recovered.
- 4) Keep a list of all important phone numbers and credit card numbers on a computer, a hard copy hidden in your house, and in a safe deposit box. This will help you to report the crime if it takes place. Ensure that you also have copies of all of your IDs, social security cards, and your passport. This will make it easier if you are a victim of a burglary or in the case a wallet is lost or stolen. Phone numbers should include your insurance company and all numbers to cancel credit cards.