



Community Watch Newsletter



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Our Mission

The mission of the Bonner County Sheriff's Office Community Watch Program is to proactively partner with law-abiding citizens to prevent and reduce crime. This will be accomplished through communication, crime prevention education and assisting communities, neighborhoods and businesses in achieving a safe environment for its residents.

Thank you for stepping up in your area of Bonner County and taking a leadership position in your local community watch group.

As of this writing we have 101 groups, 105 Neighborhood Captains, and 2184 Members

Are You Ready For Fire Season

By the time you read this Fire Season will be well underway. Listed below are some of the available resources for tracking wildfire status and ideas to improve communication with your neighbors, family and loved ones.

The following information was developed by Block Captain Fred Frankenbach.

Fire Status Resources

The following information Apps are available so you can receive alerts about fires in your area.

NIXLE: NIXLE is an automated service that allows you to sign up with local first responder agencies to receive automated text alerts. Information on this service can be found at www.Everbridge Nixil.com. You can also sign up from your cell phone by texting your **ZIP code** to **888777** to opt-in or sign-up to stay informed on critical events that directly affect you.

WATCH DUTY: Watch Duty has an app available for both Android and iPhones.

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Communications

The ability of communicating to everyone in the event of an emergency can be very challenging. The following ideas are helpful considerations in developing a core of communicating during various events like a wildfire or natural catastrophe,

Group Texting

- Watch group members can develop and utilize a text messaging App on their phone to create a group of addresses consisting of all members' cell phone numbers.
- Usage for this would be in the event of an immediate emergency in the neighborhood. Examples would include a wildfire that breaks out nearby, or a call from the Sheriff's Office to evacuate with little notice.
- Use should be limited to brief messages such as: Fire at such and such Lake, Sheriff says to Go Now! with little notice.
- In the event of an emergency, be sure to alert relevant first responder first, then the Neighborhood Watch Group.
- Participation is Voluntary.

Portable Radios (Walkie-Talkies)

These are short range radios that don't require any licensing from the FCC

Radios can work well for real time back and forth communication within a limited range. Hilly or mountain terrain can block signals.

The Bonner County Sheriff's Office Community Watch Program is rolling out a plan for a Family Radio Service (FRS). Additional Information will be presented in future Newsletters.

Email: Email provides a good option for communicating long and more complex messages or when sharing information on emergencies not posing an immediate threat to the neighborhood. However, emails can get lost among other email traffic one gets or people are not set up to get alerts for every new email message.

Pre-Planning

As your neighborhood watch group considers these options or others each participant should confirm whether they can reliably receive cell phone service when at home via a phone call or a text. With regards to the use of portable radios determine if there are any large hills that would block radio communications. Portable radio work with line of sight as the radio frequency waves cannot bend around mountains

Develop a list of all those individuals you want to contact by telephone



National Do Not Call Registry

[The National Do Not Call Registry](#) was created to stop unwanted sales calls. It's free to register your home or mobile phone number.

If you've already added your phone number to the Do Not Call Registry and are still getting a lot of unwanted calls, odds are the calls are from [scammers](#). Read about [blocking unwanted calls](#) to find out what to do about them. If you answer one of these calls, hang up and **report the call to the FTC**.

When you add your number to the Registry you will also learn:

- What the Registry Doesn't Do
- How to Report Unwanted Calls
- Registration Questions
- Other Telemarketing Rules
- How to Add Your Number to the Registry

How do I add my number to the Registry?

Go to [donotcall.gov](#) or call 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236) from the phone you want to register. It's free.

If you register your number at [donotcall.gov](#), you'll get an email with a link you need to click on within 72 hours to complete your registration.

How long will it take for sales calls to stop?

Your phone number should show up on the Registry the next day, but it can take up to 31 days for sales calls to stop. You can check whether your number is on the Registry at [donotcall.gov](#) or by calling 1-888-382-1222 from the number you want to verify.



They also have an internet based service ([watchduty.org](#)). This is a free App and will give you alerts in four counties with start fire status map layers. There are also pain accounts that provide additional information such as wildfire fighting aircraft tracking and additional map layers and weather alerts.

Telegram: Telegram has two channels of interest for users with this App. **Telegram** is available for a variety of platforms including Android, iPhone and Windows.

Panhandle Fire Watch provides reports on current wildfire status. Information is ground sourced, meaning any member can contribute. In practice, most members are also using Watch Duty so will see a lot of posting of Watch Duty information.

Panhandle Fire Watch Chat Group is a channel where people can share non-emergency wildfire related information.

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/>

Inciweb is operated by the Federal Government and collects and reports wildfire information from a variety of federal agencies such as the National Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Etc.



Humor in Uniform

Ole was training to be a Deputy Sheriff.

During one of his training sessions the instructor asked him. "What would you do if you had to arrest your wife?"

Ole quickly responded, "I'd call for backup!"



Lena went to the Sheriff's Office with her next-door neighbor, Olga, to report that her husband was missing. The detective asked for a description.

Lena said, "He's 35 years old, 6ft.tall, has dark eyes, dark wavy hair, an athletic build, weighs 185 lbs., is soft spoken and is good tew da children."

The neighbor Olga protested, "But Lena, yer husband Ole is 5 ft. 6" tall, chubby, bald, has a big mouth, and is mean tew yew and da children."

To which Lena replied, "Vell, yeah, but who vants him back?"

Notes: