

**Bloomfield Police Department**

## **Get street smart – join Neighborhood Watch**

It took just two months for Bloomfield residents to launch 21 Neighborhood Watch groups all around town. They formed after November when the Bloomfield Police Department announced its entree into the nationally popular program.

Neighborhood Watch asks average citizens to lend their neighbors a hand. It helps reduce crime and improve local communities.

Every group starts with a captain who sets up an initial meeting, at his own house or elsewhere. Bloomfield officers attend the first meeting to explain how to organize the group and keep it going. They also provide recruitment flyers for handout. It's up to the group to hold regular meetings (at least once a quarter) and determine the agenda. Officers are available to attend all meetings.

Sgt. Naomi Zepeda, who heads Bloomfield's Community Policing Unit, said more groups are welcome, particularly "in the teen streets" where there's only one group so far.

Here's what you and your neighbors will get from forming a Neighborhood Watch group:

- Direct contact with Bloomfield Police to voice concerns.
- Knowledge about keeping your homes safe.
- Awareness needed to properly respond to suspicious activity.
- Greater access to criminal activity information.
- Possible lower insurance and increased property values due to crime reduction.

To learn more, call Sgt. Zepeda at (973) 680-4100, x4627