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National Night Out Against Crime Block Party Guide

A guide for residents working to improve their neighborhoods.

A GOOD NIGHT TO GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2009

Spokane C.O.P.S., in partnership with Target, is proud to sponsor National Night Out.

It is just one of the ways we are helping to build stronger, safer communities.

For more information, or to register for your Night Out party, visit your local C.O.P.S. Substation or log onto www.spokanecops.org



Dear Spokane Resident,

An easy way to organization a neighborhood block party is to host one on National Night Out – held annually on the first Tuesday in August.

For generations, block parties have served as a way for neighbors to meet each other. Some block parties are organized around holidays such as the 4th of July or Labor Day. Others may start because of an issue affecting the neighborhood. Whatever the reason for the block party, they are fun and an easy way to build your neighborhoods spirit and unity.

You don't have to live in a neighborhood of single family homes to involved in a block party. Block parties can happen everywhere – in townhouse complexes, apartment buildings, or even in a park near a condominium.

This guide is organized so that all the necessary information, forms, and “do’s and don’ts” are in one place. So don’t hesitate! Gather a couple of neighbors, pick a date, follow the instructions in the guide, and invite everyone to join in!

To register your block party for National Night Out Against Crime, contact your nearest C.O.P.S. Substation to fill out a registration form. You may also download a registration form from www.spokanecops.org.

Sincerely,

Christy Hamilton
Director
Spokane C.O.P.S.

Maurece Vulcano
National Night Out Coordinator
Spokane C.O.P.S.

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About National Night Out

It's America's Night Out Against Crime!

National Night Out (NNO) is a unique event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch and is held the first Tuesday in August.

Last year's National Night Out campaign involved citizens, law enforcement agencies, civic groups, businesses, neighborhood organizations and local officials from over 10,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases worldwide. In all, over 34 million people participated in NNO worldwide. Last year, 6,000 Spokane residents participated in NNO by attending 149 parties hosted by neighborhoods across the city.

National Night Out is designed to:

- Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness;
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs, such as Neighborhood Watch
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships
- Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back

Along with the traditional display of outdoor lights and front porch vigils, cities, towns and neighborhoods 'celebrate' NNO with a variety of events and activities such as:

- Block parties
- Cookouts,
- Visits from local police and sheriff departments
- Parades, exhibits
- Flashlight walks, contests, and youth programs

NNO has proven to be an effective, inexpensive and enjoyable program to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. Plus the benefits our community will derive from NNO will most certainly extend well beyond the one night.

Adapted from www.nationalnightout.org

10 Reasons To Have a Block Party

1. To have fun - no excuse is needed to celebrate!
2. To meet your neighbors. When you know who lives in your neighborhood, the more likely you are to identify strangers or suspicious people.
3. To increase the sense of belonging in your neighborhood.
4. To organize a Block Watch group, contact your nearest C.O.P.S. Substation to schedule your meetings.
5. To make additional connections within the community. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club, baby-sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.
6. To plan a campaign for traffic slowdown, get better lighting, or address other interests.
7. To "use" the street for one day, to, for example, roller blade, play hockey or play other games.
8. To meet some of the old time residents in the neighborhood and learn the neighborhood's history.
9. To have a neighborhood clean-up day, play some good music and barbecue once all of the work is done.
10. To start a yearly neighborhood tradition of getting together at least once a year!

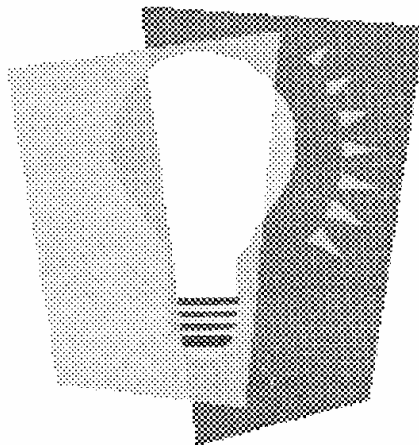
How to Get Started

1. Gather a few neighbors and divide up the tasks. Decide on a possible theme, activities etc. Decide what to do about food.
2. Start knocking on doors to find out if there is enough interest and, if so, which day would be the best for the most people.
3. Pick a date and time (mid-afternoon to evening works best). Plan to end the event before 9:00pm in order to respect bedtime and neighborhood peace and quiet. Think of an alternate plan in case of poor weather.
4. Go door to door:
 - Hand out an invitation (use the one included in this guide, or create your own).
 - Ask people to fill out the Block Party details sheet and let them know where to return it (use the one included in this guide, or create your own).
 - Recruit volunteers.
5. Decide if this will be a block party restricted to those on the street/block or will people be able to invite friends/relatives (if yes, how many). Make this clear in your flyer/invitation.



Good Ideas

- Invite a City council member, school principal or city staff member to your block party.
- Make sure you have a sign-in sheet with the names of everyone who attends the party and everyone you contacted; after all, the idea of a block party is to connect neighbors.
- Identify special talents your neighbors might have - you may be living next to a magician, singer, dancer, artist, radio host or prize winning cook.
- Plan lots of activities for children.
- Include activities that encourage people to meet each other. Use nametags and include children by asking them to create the tags.
- Make sure that people with disabilities can participate in the activities and include their attendants (those with Seeing Eye dogs or in wheelchairs).
- Institute a bathroom policy "everyone to use their own" so that home security is maintained.
- Inspire clean up after the party by rewarding children with a prize for packing up garbage.
- Have a block/street clean up as part of the party.
- Distribute an evaluation form to participants (to get a good response, number the forms and have door prizes for returned entries).

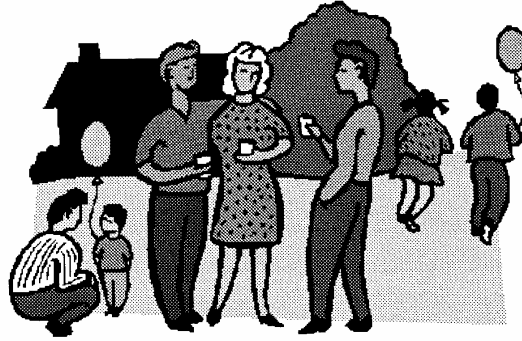


REMINDERS

- Alcohol is only permitted on private property, not on city streets or in parks.
- Residents should observe security precautions, for example lock back doors to houses, and keep equipment in sight.
- In hot weather food spoils quickly: all perishables such as mayonnaise, salads or meats should be stored in coolers and be kept at the proper temperature.
- Food cannot be sold on city streets unless the proper permits have been obtained.
- Loud amplification of music is prohibited.
- Observe safety precautions for all activities, for example keep barbeques away from activities for children.
- Post signs the day before reminding everyone to remove cars and that the street will be closed.



YOU ARE INVITED TO



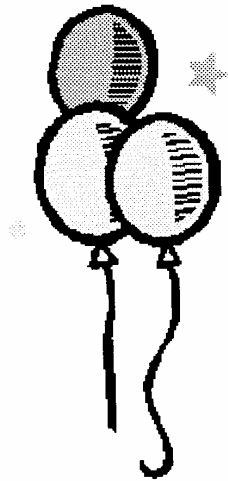
A BLOCK PARTY On National Night Out!

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____

THEME/EVENT: _____



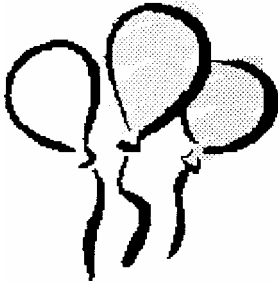
To RSVP, or to help out, please phone:

_____ at _____, or

_____ at _____



Block Party Details



We are glad you can join us for National Night Out:

On _____ at _____
(date) (time)

We are asking each family to bring:

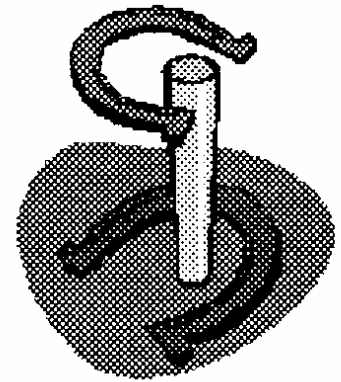
- chairs to sit on
- your own meats or vegetarian food to barbecue
- 1 salad and 1 desert to share (make enough for ___ people)
- your own beverages or coffee and tea will be provided
- your own non-breakable plates, cups and cutlery
- other

In addition, do you have the following that could be used:

_____ A barbecue

_____ A table

_____ A cooler



Do you have a talent that you would like to share with us?

Suggestions for activities you could organize?

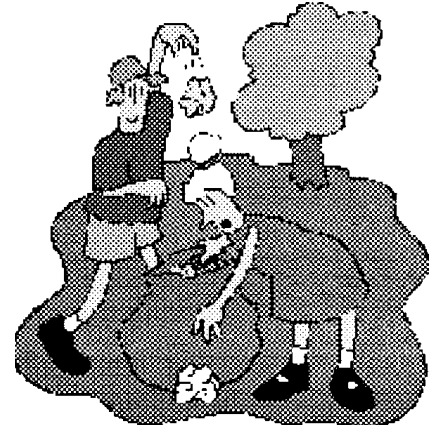
Please return this form by _____ (date) to:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

National Night Out Evaluation Form

To help us plan future block parties,
your feedback is appreciated.



What were the 3 best things about this block party?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What 3 things would you change for next time?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How would you like the neighborhood connections gained at the block party to be maintained during the year?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are you willing to help with the planning of future neighborhood events?

yes _____ no _____

if yes, please leave your name and phone number

with _____ at _____

Please leave this form at (address) at _____

Thank You

