

Dear Spokane Neighbor,

"First came the crack cocaine buyer, then the prostitutes. My daughter was harassed, my son robbed at gunpoint. Shouting, screaming, gunshots and cars screeching tires could be heard at all hours of the day and night.

After a 2-year struggle to halt the drug dealing, 18 neighbors collectively sued the property owner in Small Claims Court for allowing a public nuisance to emanate from his property. They were each awarded \$2,000 in damages. Within weeks, the nuisance house was closed down and the neighborhood was on the mend."

Safe Streets!, in Spokane, motivates individuals to participate at the most fundamental level of the democratic process to create a community that reflects the standards and moral of the residents. It also teaches the community how to maintain those standards.

Safe Streets! Was Born!

Safe Streets! will

- ★ show you how to recognize nuisance house danger signs,
- ★ organize your block,
- ★ form a team with police and possible city officials,
- ★ document a public nuisance,
- ★ research property ownership,
- ★ deal with the cooperative and uncooperative property owners.

Safe Streets! empowers citizens to create a nuisance free neighborhood that is a safe, clean, and healthy environment for individuals and families. Through this process, people rediscover a lost treasure far more valuable than any gem...their community.

SPOKANE C.O.P.S. NEIGHBORHOOD SUBSTATIONS

Greater Spokane C.O.P.S.....	755-2677
120 N. Stevens St.	
C.O.P.S. East Central.....	625-3330
3001 E. 5th Ave.	
C.O.P.S. Lewis & Clark	354-6941
521 W. 4th Ave.	
C.O.P.S. Logan	625-3333
802 E. Sharp Ave.	
C.O.P.S. Neva-Wood	625-3353
4705 N. Addison St.	
C.O.P.S. North Central.....	625-3348
630 W. Shannon Ave.	
C.O.P.S. Northeast	625-3343
5208 N. Market St.	
C.O.P.S. North Hill	625-3336
Mobile Unit	
C.O.P.S. Northwest	625-3336
2215 W. Wellesley Ave. #D	
C.O.P.S. Southeast.....	625-3326
2809 E. 29th Ave.	
C.O.P.S. West.....	625-3340
1901 W. Boone Ave.	
Mission Ave. C.O.P.S.	625-3301
1810 N. Greene St.	



Spokane C.O.P.S.
901 N. Monroe #254
Spokane, WA 99201

www.spokanecops.org

CRIME CHECK.....456-2233



SAFE STREETS

CREATING A
NEIGHBORHOOD FREE
FROM NUISANCE



**COMMUNITY ACTION GUIDE
FOR THE CITY AND
COUNTY OF SPOKANE**

This information is given for information only and not a substitute for any individual's own investigation. It is encouraged that you seek your own legal advice.

The purpose of **Safe Streets!** is to introduce neighborhood organization's choices in dealing with nuisance houses in their neighborhoods. Nuisance houses are typically involved in numerous criminal and civil nuisance activities and conditions that seriously impair the quality of life in their neighborhood.

Neighborhood groups must manage themselves by appointing a group leader. The group may then use the **Safe Streets!** booklet to guide them through the process. Spokane C.O.P.S. and Spokane County S.C.O.P.E. provide published educational materials and workshop opportunities to learn more about these tools.

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT SOME OF THE TOPICS COVERED IN THE SAFE STREETS! BOOKLET...



Criminal and Civil Nuisances

Public nuisances commonly operate from a piece of property that contains a structure such as a house, apartment, motel or liquor store or the property may be a vacant lot. Allowing a nuisance house to operate from a piece of property is breaking city and state property laws; therefore, a nuisance house can be regulated by good management practices.

Activities and Conditions

When a piece of property fits the definition of a public nuisance, you usually have activities or conditions on the property. A list of these is outlined in the **Safe Streets!** booklet.

Emotional and Mental Distress

The day-in and day-out craziness a nuisance house or property creates in your life damages you in many ways. In legal terms, damages caused by a public nuisance are called "Emotional and Mental Distress."



Whose Responsibility is it to Get Rid of a Nuisance House?

Members of the **Safe Streets!** team could include neighbors impacted by the specific nuisance house, the owner of the nuisance house, other professional facilitators for and in your neighborhood.

Protecting Your Property

Engrave your valuables, maintain your home and property, get to know your area C.O.P.S. Substation. They have lots of information on protecting your property.

Identify the Property Owner



By calling the County Assessor's Office or a title company, you are able to identify the property owner. Ask for owner/taxpayer information at the street address of the nuisance house.

Getting Rid of a Nuisance House

Start a Block Watch, document everything, know when to call 911 or Crime Check, activate a telephone tree and log activities. Once your neighborhood group completes the necessary steps, it is time to "unwelcome" the nuisance house.

Appropriate Action for Owner

In most cases, a property owner/manager will not have to go through the entire eviction process, especially if the nuisance involves illegal drug activities. Drug dealers generally do not want to be hauled into court and tend to move out after being served notice or within a negotiated timeframe.

Small Claims Court

If the property owner/manager does not take appropriate positive action, and mediation did not work, it is time to consider filing a claim for your damages in Small Claims Court. The **Safe Streets!** booklet explains how to start a small claims court lawsuit, locations for Spokane County District/Municipal Courts/Probation, getting ready for court, court and appeal hearings, filing fee and costs and collecting your judgment.



Appendix

The **Safe Streets!** booklet contains numerous forms for helping you accomplish your goal for eliminating nuisance houses/property in your neighborhood.

Since these laws are complicated, subject to change, and continually being interpreted by the courts, please contact an attorney when dealing with specific nuisance questions.

For detailed information about the above topics, contact **Safe Streets!** at Spokane C.O.P.S. 835-4572 or S.C.O.P.E. at 477-3376