

## Community Focus Statement E: Improve public safety.

**Action Statement E.2: Encourage community members to participate in the Citizens Patrol Program coordinated through the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.**

E.2

**Benchmarks:** In partnership with the San Bernardino County Sheriff Department, the Citizens Patrol program in the Crest Forest communities has grown by recruitment of qualified volunteers who meet regularly and provide at least 8 volunteer hours per month.

**Champion:** Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

**Estimated Cost:** Volunteer time.



Citizen observer patrol vehicle. Photo source: [CZmarlin](#)

A Citizens on Patrol program is a proactive effort to reduce crime that also helps to build closer ties between members of the Crest Forest communities and the County Sheriff's Department. Community members who participate in the program assist Sheriff's Department officers in law enforcement and other community safety duties, increasing the coverage of law enforcement personnel in the Crest Forest area. The Crest Forest area has a well-developed and continuing Citizens Patrol Program that has been very effective and helpful during community

events. They also provide routine patrols. This Action Plan is to incentivize recruitment and ensure the program continues.

Citizens on Patrol participants handle some patrol duties and other general responsibilities, sometimes along with Sheriff's Department personnel. Participants may also assist with disaster-related duties, including helping with evacuations, rescue, and recovery operations. Participants are not expected to directly confront suspicious persons or to place themselves in any other position that may compromise their safety, but to report such events to law enforcement officers. All volunteers in the Citizens on Patrol program must meet requirements set by the Sheriff's Department and attend a Citizen Volunteer Academy training course before beginning their work. They must also maintain first aid and CPR certifications, attend monthly meetings, and commit at least 8 hours per month to patrol duties.

A Citizens on Patrol program helps to make law enforcement activities more visible in the Crest Forest communities, which can contribute to a greater feeling of safety and security. Local community members who participate in Citizens on Patrol can also serve as liaisons between the communities and the Sheriff's Department, maintaining open lines of communication between law enforcement personnel and Crest Forest community members. There are also opportunities for the program to expand its reach to other community organizations or

neighborhood groups, recruiting additional volunteers and making people more aware of the program. A larger number of Citizens on Patrol volunteers may also allow for the creation of specialized units to address specific needs in the Crest Forest communities.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Publicize the existing Citizens Patrol group to neighborhood groups, such as homeowners associations, neighborhood watch groups, or faith-based institutions.	Champion Citizens' Patrol volunteers, community groups	Years 1–3	US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, <i>The Collaboration Toolkit for Community Organizations Effective Strategies to Partner with Law Enforcement</i> , 2010, revised 2014  University of California Berkeley, School of Law, <i>What Works in Community Policing?</i> November 2013  City of Palm Desert Citizens on Patrol <a href="http://www.cityofpalm-desert.org/departments/special-programs/citizens-on-patrol-cops">http://www.cityofpalm-desert.org/departments/special-programs/citizens-on-patrol-cops</a>  San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Citizens on Patrol program <a href="http://cms.sbcounty.gov/sheriff/Divisions/VolunteerForces/CitizenonPatrol.aspx">http://cms.sbcounty.gov/sheriff/Divisions/VolunteerForces/CitizenonPatrol.aspx</a>
2. Encourage Crest Forest residents who meet the requirements to go through Citizens Patrol training and become active volunteers.	Champion with Citizens Patrol volunteers, community groups	Years 1–3	
3. Increase visibility of the Citizens Patrol group by holding quarterly workshops, having a presence at community events, and maintaining a Facebook page/email newsletter.	Champion with Citizens Patrol volunteers, community groups	Years 1–3	
4. Hold annual recruitment efforts to provide information and encourage residents' involvement in the Citizens Patrol group.	Champion with Citizens Patrol volunteers, community groups	Years 1–3	
5. Reach out to the Citizens Patrol volunteers annually to evaluate the program and identify potential improvements.	Champion with Representative from Citizens Patrol volunteers with support from San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department	Annually	