

Fox Crossing Police Department

NEIGHBORS AGAINST DRUGS

NUISANCE DRUG PREMISES

This brochure provides basic information on nuisance drug premises, indicators for identifying a drug house, and log sheets to track nuisance drug locations.

Drugs are an irritant and a challenging problem in our community. Through active community involvement this problem can be addressed. But, citizens must be willing to act and take responsibility for protecting their neighborhoods.

The key is education and knowing what to look for, being a good witness, and protecting yourself. Education slows frustration by understanding what law enforcement may and may not do as actions cannot be taken on suspicion alone. If so, drug houses would immediately be shut down – at the sacrifice of personal freedoms. The same Constitution protecting law-abiding citizens also protects suspected criminals -*all citizens are free from unlawful searches and seizures of their person, vehicles, and homes.*

The Fox Crossing Police Department is progressive and aggressively seeks to rid neighborhoods of crime. Sound legal cases are built to stand in court through the collection of tangible, credible evidence. When this process fails, criminals go free and return to your neighborhoods and scoff at the system they beat. Patience and vigilance is needed.

CHRONIC NUISANCE ORDINANCE

In June of 2008, the Fox Crossing Police Department was facing a spike in calls for service; many being repeat calls to the same property for nuisance type of activity. These chronic nuisance calls affect the quality of life in neighborhoods and can include offenses such as loud noise, disorderly people, fighting, damage to property, drug offenses, and the list goes on. The police department began researching this problem and developed a chronic nuisance program and ordinance aimed at not only reducing these calls, but increasing our communication with landlords and property owners and working collaboratively to resolve many of these concerns.

The ordinance allows for three nuisance calls resulting in an arrest or citation on a property within a year. The police department will notify property owners and landlords of these calls and begin working ahead of time to curb future calls. If a property were to receive three such calls, we will meet with the property owner to explain the concern and the need for assistance in combating the problem(s). If the property owner fails to or refuses to provide any assistance, the police department can issue a citation for maintaining a public nuisance and bill the property owner for any future nuisance calls to that property.

COMMON INDICATORS OF DRUG ACTIVITY

Typically, there are common activities associated with drug houses. Indicators alone do not prove a drug house exists. However, indicators provide reasonable suspicion that may warrant further investigation.

Foot Traffic:

- Visitors walking to the residence,
- Unkempt, disoriented or paranoid visitors,
- Visitors carrying in tools or electronics and leaving with nothing.
- Unusually full or heavy backpacks or bags.

Vehicle Traffic:

- Heavy or large volume influxes,
- Short stays of under 20 minutes,
- Clean plates on dirty cars,
- Damaged vehicles,

Characteristics:

- Garage door never opens,
- Closed blinds or boarded windows,
- Chemical containers brought in and out of residence,
- Chemical or caustic smells (cat urine)
- Drug paraphernalia left around neighborhood.

Change in Conditions:

- Trash or junk accumulation,
- Premise or yard deterioration,
- Dismantling and leaving vehicles or machinery.
- Drug users often experience nervous energy and start projects but cannot concentrate or complete tasks.

Occupants:

- Diminished hygiene,
- Never leave and do not work,
- Awake or asleep for days,
- Unsupervised and neglected children,
- Unattended and neglected pets,

Surroundings:

- Increased neighborhood crimes such as thefts and burglaries
- Neighbors exhibit unusual behavior and visit or defend drug house occupants.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Documentation is the key to building cases against drug houses. Don't assume the police already know, or that a neighbor will call. Don't assume one report is all that is needed, if the activity keeps on occurring, keep on reporting it. All neighbors affected by the drug activity are encouraged to report. Drug deals tend to be completed quickly and are often over before an officer can arrive, however don't let that deter you from reporting what you saw.

Your reports are very important whether you wish to get involved in the process of getting rid of a drug house or not. The more intelligence that we have on this activity, the better prepared we are in decision making and tactics to address the problem.

So what are we looking for?

- Date and time of activity
- Description of vehicles
- Description of activity
- Description of people