

## Jamaica Hills Association Crimewatch Guide

### Take steps to prevent crime

- Install a security alarm and motion detectors.
- Lock doors and windows of your home and cars.
- Do not leave valuables in your car or trunk. Do not leave valuables in your home visible to passersby.
- Ask contractors to lock up ladders when not in use.
- Follow the BPD's safety tips for burglar-proofing your home.\*
- Volunteer to become a street captain if your block doesn't have one:  
**advocate@jamaicahills.org**
- Schedule a crimewatch meeting with your neighbors once a year.
- Get to know your neighbors. Look out for your neighbors.
- Call 9-1-1 immediately if you notice suspicious activity.

### Report crimes and suspicious activity

1. Call 9-1-1 immediately.
2. Alert your immediate neighbors promptly.
3. Contact your street captain promptly.  
> Contact the JHA **advocate@jamaicahills.org** if you don't know who your street captain is, or if your block doesn't have a street captain.

### Resources for Jamaica Hills street captains

#### When you are contacted about a crime on your block

1. Confirm that your neighbor has called the police.
2. Confirm police reports by contacting BPD Community Service Office.
3. Get precise and factual information: Time and location, description of crime or suspicious activity, description of individuals, cars, license plate numbers observed
4. Promptly send confirmed reports to:
  - Neighbors on your list
  - Other street captains for distribution
  - The JHA Advocate

#### To plan and run a crimewatch meeting

1. Contact BPD Neighborhood Crimewatch. Ask that a District E13 police officer attend your meeting.
2. Distribute a meeting notice to your neighbors.\*
3. At the meeting, collect phone numbers and email addresses of the neighbors on your block.
4. Pass out crime prevention guidelines.\* Review police reports and crime reporting steps.
5. Get to know your neighbors!

- Police 9-1-1
- BPD E13 Detectives  
617-343-5628
- BPD Community Service Office  
617-343-5624
- BPD Crimewatch  
617-343-4345
- My street captain  
  
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- JHA Advocate  
advocate@jamaicahills.org
- Resources  
www.jamaicahills.org  
www.bostoncrimewatch.com  
www.E13BPD.com

### How to Call the Police

1. Dial 9-1-1.
2. State your name and location.
3. Describe the suspicious activity or the crime. Observe the direction in which the alleged criminals are traveling, including car model and license plate number.
4. Be precise and factual: Describe what you observed. Do not make speculations.

From a cell phone you have two phone-number options:

1. Calling 9-1-1 takes you to the State Police. Ask to be transferred to the Boston Police.
2. Calling 617-343-4911 directs you to the Boston Police.

**Location Tracking** If your cell phone carrier enables a Global Positioning System (GPS), calling 9-1-1 from a cell phone may enable the police to track your location. Confirm GPS functionality with your carrier. GPS is not available if you dial 617-343-4911 on your cell phone. GPS is available if you call from a landline phone. Always dial 9-1-1 from a landline phone.

\*A BPD safety guide is on the other side of this page and on our website: **www.jamaicahills.org**. Select **Community Action** and then **Crimewatch**. Contact **advocate@jamaicahills.org** for templates for crimewatch meeting notices.

## **DOORS AND WINDOWS**

Figure out your weak spots. Imagine you are locked out of your house and absolutely have to get back in because you think you left the stove on. How would you break into your house? That area is probably a weak spot.

### **Doors**

Install peepholes. Replace weak doors, reglue wooden panels, or attach metal plate or half-inch plywood liner to back. Or add decorative grillwork. If there is glass within 40 inches of the door, you can: cover glass with polycarbonate plastic sheet, add decorative grill or grill door, or replaced with solid-core door. Don't forget basement or porch doors.

### **Locks**

Install good deadbolt locks with extra-long screws (2-1/2") on all doors (don't forget basement or porch doors). The bolt should extend at least 1 to 1-1/2" into the striker plate. If glass is within 40 inches of the lock, a double-cylinder deadbolt (keys for both sides) should be installed (but be sure to keep key readily available so you can exit quickly, if necessary). Or, the glass should be reinforced with lexan (poly-carbonate plastic sheet). With this treatment, the criminal can't break the glass, reach in and unlock the door. Replace weak strike plate with a high-security, heavy-duty one. Don't forget to have good locks installed on back, porch, and basement doors.

### **Windows**

Accessible double-hung windows can easily be pried open with a screwdriver. Storm windows do not add security. Crescent latch screws, can be popped out. Reinforce any accessible, wooden-double-sash windows by pinning them at the corners where the two sashes overlap. Drill at a slight downward angle all the way through the lower window and halfway through the upper window. Insert long nails (can be easily removed for emergency exit). For ventilation, drill additional holes no more than 5 inches above the first holes in the upper window frame.

### **Sliding Doors and Windows**

Brace with a locking device that attaches to the frame. A wooden pole or broomstick handle in the base channel can be pried out, so install a key-operated locking device. Exterior thin gauge aluminum can be peeled to gain entry, so tighten adjustment screws to prevent lifting door out of channel.

### **Casement Windows**

Casement windows can be easily forced or pried if the crank operator is loose. Adjust to reduce excess play. Remove the crank when not at home so that windows can't be pried.

### **Obstructed Views**

Any accessible door or window that is shielded from view by shrubs or entryways is a potential weak spot. Trim shrubs (especially around first floor and basement windows). For entryways that obscure doors, make sure the area is well lit. Use motion detector lights. Always keep outer doors locked. Never buzz people in without knowing who is there. (It's much easier to keep an intruder out than to get him out.)

### **Garage Doors**

On overhead track-operated doors, locks are usually poor quality. Panels that are thin or made of glass can be kicked

out or broken. Overhead tracks may have loosened. Install case-hardened hasps and padlocks on the outside. Reinforce weak panels (see Doors above). Secure track with heavier screws. Pin track above bar by drilling two holes and inserting heavy nails or bolts. For double outswing doors, install heavy-duty surface bolts at top and bottom of inactive door. Install case-hardened hasp and padlock on outside or inside.

### **Alarms**

Consider installing an alarm on the doors and windows that are the most vulnerable.

### **Porches**

Porch doors and windows are often obscured from view and should therefore be as secure as possible. Don't forget upper story porch doors and windows. See Doors and Windows above.

## **LIGHTING**

Adequate exterior lighting and interior timers are important. Motion detector lights add the element of surprise and are economical.

### **Exterior**

All entrances should be well lit. Leave porch or front door light on from dusk to dawn. Use motion detector lights on sides and back of house).

### **Interior**

Use timers for lights when you are away or have any change in your schedule to create the appearance that your home is occupied.

### **Yard and Neighborhood Maintenance**

Keep your yard and neighborhood well maintained. A deteriorating street conveys the message to criminals "nobody here cares or is watching out." Any time spent out on your street or front yard, gardening, shoveling or sitting on your porch is valuable for overall neighborhood safety. You get to know who lives there, you share information, and you create a watchful presence.

- ☐ Never keep ladders or things for a thief to stand on in your yard. They can be stolen or used to hoist a thief to a window.
- ☐ Don't display packaging of expensive items in your trash.
- ☐ Ensure your house number is clearly visible from the street.
- ☐ Make sure street lights, vacant lots and other common areas are well maintained on your street.
- ☐ Make sure that the elderly people living on your street get their walks shoveled and get their trash taken out in bad weather. It is important that their homes look lived in and well maintained also.

## **KEEP A LIST OF YOUR VALUABLES**

Include descriptions and serial numbers of electronic and stereo equipment, cameras, computers, sports equipment, jewelry, silver pieces, home office equipment, and power tools. Consider photographing or videotaping these possessions to document them.

**Call 9-1-1 if you see suspicious activity.**