



Neighborhood Services
Partners with Communities
for Excellence in Leadership

Mitigating the Impacts of Vacant Homes on Neighborhoods *A Neighborhood Leaders' Group Resource*

The meeting of the Neighborhood Leaders Group held on Tuesday, December 2, 2008 included a brainstorming session to identify what neighborhoods need to do to mitigate the effects of vacant homes. We are currently experiencing an unprecedented number of foreclosures and the slow housing market leaves other homes unoccupied for prolonged periods.

What is being done and what can be done about vacant and foreclosed homes:

Neighborhood Services

- Property Code Enforcement (PCE) is proactively checking vacant homes to make sure they are secured
- "Eyes and Ears" form (where citizens volunteer to monitor vacant homes for building maintenance, break ins) is linked from Neighborhood Leaders page
- Coordination between PWC police and Neighborhood Services to close up, lock or board broken windows and doors of unsecured properties
- List of known foreclosed homes to be emailed to Neighborhood Leaders
- Promote vacant home monitoring through media

Citizens

- Leaders will check list of vacancies provided by Neighborhood Services for homes in their areas to monitor
- Monitor vacant homes in neighborhood
- Immediately report any suspicious activities to the police
- Establish a relationship with realtor, if known, and contact realtor when conditions deteriorate at the vacant home
- Obtain permission from realtor to mow lawn of vacant home and pick up litter
- Report property code violations to Neighborhood Services
- Leaders can call distributors of unsolicited newspapers with addresses of vacant homes and ask that delivery be stopped. Effort must be persistent and repeated.
- Promote vacant home monitoring by word-of-mouth and find other volunteers to help monitor and work with realtors

Other thoughts:

- Engage business partners
 - Prince William Association of Realtors
 - Trash services
 - Utilities
- There is a need for materials to be available in Spanish
- Post materials on web for downloading and printing by neighborhood volunteers