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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Neighborhood Watch programs add significant value

MURPHY (January 26, 2015) Recognizing that police officers can't be everywhere 24 hours a day, residents are encouraged to take an active role in watching out for each other, says Detective Brad Taylor, coordinator of Murphy's Neighborhood Watch program.

"That commitment to being vigilant is extremely admirable," he said. "While our City is not extremely large or spread out, we simply cannot be in all places at once. Getting assistance from residents through a Neighborhood Watch program extends our reach immeasurably. The more that people get involved in their neighborhoods, the stronger the fight against crime."

Neighborhood Watch programs have been in place in Murphy for more than 15 years, and during that time, the activity in neighborhoods has been either steady and productive or sporadic and uneven. Taylor and his colleagues want to ensure that the program's basic objectives remain firmly entrenched in the community.

"There's nothing extremely complicated about a Neighborhood Watch program," he said. "At its very basic level, the program simply encourages neighbors to actively report criminal activity or suspicious behaviors by calling either 9-1-1 or our non-emergency number, depending on the circumstance."

The value of the program, while perhaps not easily measured, can nevertheless prove to be very significant.

"The scenario we want to reverse is when officers arrive at a crime scene and are told by neighbors that they saw something suspicious but did not report it," he added. "In reality, it should be the other way around. Residents should call us with their suspicions. That way, we may be able to either prevent a crime or solve it while evidence is fresh."

Starting a Neighborhood Watch program simply requires a call to Detective Taylor. Then, a general meeting in the neighborhood is set up to go over the program's features. Taylor works hand-in-hand with many homeowner associations in implementing the program and continues to check in with them on a monthly basis. In fact, Taylor hosts a monthly meeting of Neighborhood Watch coordinators on the last Thursday of each month at the Police Department offices.

"Our motto is 'err on the side of caution' when dealing with a suspicious activity," he said. "If the call results in nothing, there's no harm done. But if there is something there, then we are that much ahead."

Detective Brad Taylor can be contacted at btaylor@murphytx.org or by calling (972) 468-4214.

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ABOUT MURPHY -- Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 18,020, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income above the state average. With more than 70 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a country feel while exhibiting an aggressive economic development stance. The centrally-located municipal complex includes four buildings that house Fire, Police, City Administration and Public Works. Money Magazine has dubbed Murphy as the 27th Best Place to Live in America for small cities, and D Magazine placed Murphy as the fifth best suburb in the 2014 list, where it has consistently ranked in the top 10.