

Block Party Booklet

TIPS FOR PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD CELEBRATION!



CITY OF *Salem*
AT YOUR SERVICE

Brought to you by the
SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME PREVENTION UNIT

The City of Salem supports and encourages every citizen willing to do their part to create a stronger and safer community.

While a neighborhood is a geographic area which people share, a community is a group of people who identify with and support one another. We are striving for all neighborhoods to have a strong sense of community through relationships established between neighbors and neighbors and police. Activities that bring residents, businesses, property owners and other members of the neighborhood together help to strengthen neighborhood ties and build community.

Through neighborhood gatherings or formal activities, such as Neighborhood Watch, it is possible to keep your neighborhood safe and a great place to live, work, and play!

**Salem Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
555 Liberty St. SE, Room 130
Salem, Oregon 97301
(503) 588-6175**



Why have a party?

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTIES CELEBRATE NEIGHBORHOOD UNITY

Block parties are a fun and easy way to bring neighbors together to build a sense of community where it matters most—on your very own block. Neighborhoods are safer places to live when residents get to know each other and establish relationships beyond the friendly once-in-a-while wave. A block party is just the way to do it!

Block parties, or neighborhood get-togethers, can be a simple front yard affair, a close-the-street barbecue bash with kids activities, a holiday tea, or even a neighborhood garage sale!

Perhaps, graffiti has cropped up in some spots in your neighborhood; a paint-over party is a way for neighbors to come together to address the issue, and celebrate you are united in keeping your neighborhood safe and a great place to live, work, and play!

Whatever your choice, this booklet is intended to give you some helpful hints on how to make your neighborhood activity a safe and resounding success!

Ready, Set, Go!

GETTING STARTED

Try not to let the thought of planning a party overwhelm you. The purpose is to create a fun and memorable event which is easy to do. This booklet will take you through the following planning steps to help you get ready, get set, and go!

- **Neighborhood interest**
- **Location**
- **Invitations and fliers**
- **Food**
- **Activities**

a street party with a band. Salem's city noise ordinance may apply, but a variance may be requested on your Street Closure Permit application [See page 3].

A sure way to avoid any problems with neighbors is to let them know ahead of time of any plans for music or amplified sound. Block parties and neighborhood events are intended to bring neighbors together, not put them at odds, so discuss the particulars and talk about the time frame. Agree on a reasonable start and end time that doesn't damper anyone's neighborhood spirit!

Lastly, there's one activity that often gets forgotten and can be simple enough that everyone can participate - cleanup! The easiest rule to remember: Leave the place cleaner than you found it!

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now that you have had a successful block party or neighborhood cleanup, what else can you do to keep your neighborhood connected *and* safe? The answer is **Neighborhood Watch**.

Since you now know your neighbors' names and have met their families, going one step further to commit to Neighborhood Watch is simple. You've already established the foundation for a close-knit neighborhood, the next piece is committing to one another to report criminal and suspicious activity using Neighborhood Watch as the framework.

Establishing your Neighborhood Watch group is as easy as converting your invitation list into a participation list. Get your neighbors together on the idea and the police department will provide you and your neighbors a specialized training on home and personal safety and how to identify and report suspicious activity. The information will include the latest criminal trends and activities specific to your area.

Call the Crime Prevention Unit at (503) 588-6175 to get your Neighborhood Watch going and growing right away! Make our community stronger by making it safer. Join Neighborhood Watch!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food & Fun!

Good food = good party, so when planning your celebration think about the different ways that food can be served. A potluck offers the greatest variety of dishes, but you can always plan a menu and have different neighbors help out with the various parts of the meal. Or you can keep it really simple and have a root beer float party! Think simple, yet yummy!

Regardless of the style you choose, don't forget that many local businesses are willing to sponsor events that bring community members together, especially during National Night Out. Be sure to ask early as some businesses have specific donation policies. Also, some businesses are willing to donate giveaway items, such as pens or balloons as a way to promote their company.

Don't forget that local businesses are part of the neighborhood and certainly would enjoy being invited, too! Remind them that you appreciate all they can and do contribute to your area. And, most important - be sure to send them a post-party 'thank you' note!

ACTIVITIES

Another important component to a block party is activities. Make sure games or contests are age appropriate, safe and fun. Suggestions include:

CONTESTS

Chalk art

Watermelon-eating

Best Pie on the Block

Paper airplanes

Neighborhood Trivia

GAMES

Cake-walk

Volleyball

Scavenger Hunt

Horseshoes

Piñata

Music can also add a little something special to your event. Music, however, can be loud, so be sure to research that detail if you are planning

Everyone can help!

NEIGHBOR INTEREST

Start by speaking with your neighbors and determining their interest in having a neighborhood get together. Ideally, you want to have all of your neighbors participate, but work and vacation schedules can put a pinch in any party calendar. Talk about schedules and the best days of the week that work for the majority of folks. Remember, if you want to close your street, take into account the time it take to process the request. [Refer to the *Location* section of this booklet.]

Maybe you want to have a special guest visit like your City Councilor, a police officer, or your neighborhood fire engine. Be sure to determine their availability, too! Also, letting your neighbors in on the plan may get their interest in helping to plan and even take on some of the responsibilities. Don't be shy about asking for assistance. You'll never know if your neighbor is a closet party planner if you don't let them in on the exciting news! Consider the following:

- Form a block party planning committee consisting of neighbors from a few households.
- Determine the budget for your party. Will it be potluck-style or will you collect donations from participating neighbors or businesses? [Refer to the *Food* section of this booklet.]
- Figure out who has what. Tables, barbecue pit, volleyball net, lawn chairs, etc.
- Don't forget to divvy up the tasks amongst your planning team to keep it all ***fun and simple***.

LOCATION: CHOOSING THE RIGHT ONE

Once you have a date in mind, the next step is to decide where you're going to have your event. The location is an important consideration. Most block parties are front yard affairs or backyard barbecues, but there are other options.

For example, you may apply for a permit to close your street and have a *real block* party. Don't forget, Salem has many great neighborhood parks to provide the perfect setting.

Street Closure Permits

If you would like to close your street for your event, make sure to plan ahead! It's a good idea to talk to all the neighbors who will be affected by the street closure to make sure their needs can be met during the time of the closure.

Next, contact the Public Works Department's Parks & Transportations Services Division, at least 30 days prior to the party, to fill out a Temporary Street Closure permit. The fee for the permit is \$50 with an exception for National Night Out block parties held on the first Tuesday of each August. National Night Out parties are registered through the police department, and the registration includes a section for street closures and park use.

Along with the permit application, you may request to borrow equipment such as barricades or "No Parking" signs which you will need in order to indicate that the street is closed. For more information, contact Parks & Transportation Services at (503) 588-6211.

Park Settings

If there is a park close to or on your block, it might be just right for your party. For example, six of Salem's parks located in neighborhood settings have barbecue grills (Brush College, Fairmount, Morningside, Orchard Heights, Sumpter, Woodmansee).

Neighborhood parks are not available to reserve, but are available for drop-in use. Neighborhood park hours are 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and community and large urban parks are open until 12:00 midnight.

Remember: There are rules and regulations apply for use of a park, open space, or public street for an event such as a block party. Be sure to contact the Parks & Transportations Services Division at (503) 588-6211 prior to your event check on compliance with applicable restrictions. The complete Parks, Streets, and Public Open Spaces Administrative Rules and Regulations is available at www.cityofsalem.net under the Parks & Transportation Services Division link.





INVITATIONS

What, When & Where

When it comes to getting the word out about the celebration or activity you are planning, your imagination is the limit

when creating your invitation or flier. Most personal computers have some easy programs that can zip you through putting an invitation together. Invitations can be part of your neighborhood newsletter or your email group. A simple flier can be distributed door to door. If time is a factor, pages 5 through 8 contain simple examples that you can reproduce. Keep in mind that the standard rule for sending out invitations is at least two weeks in advance.

However, if you're Internet savvy, check out the various websites dedicated to *e-invitations* and party ideas. And, since social media has taken a lead in communication these days, you may want to create a special event page on your favorite networking site to keep your neighbors updated on the plans and build enthusiasm for your gathering. After the party you can post photos of the fun, so neighbors can enjoy the memories of spending time together while creating a crime-free watch-out-for-each-other atmosphere!

And, after your party, don't forget to send a thank you note to businesses or other groups that donated food or other party items. Thank you notes remind them of their generosity and subliminally "invite" them to donate again next year!

Some of the sample fliers in this booklet are of the very popular **National Night Out Block Party**. It is an event celebrated in thousands of communities across the country on the first Tuesday in August. Part of an annual national crime prevention campaign, residents are asked to lock their doors and spend the evening visiting with neighbors and police. It's an opportunity for neighbors to join together to send a message to criminals that your block is united against crime.

If you wish to have an officer and a crime prevention or local business mascot visit your party, the Salem Police Department asks that you register with the Crime Prevention Unit. Generally, forms become available online each May at www.cityofsalem/nno or by calling (503) 588-6175.

National Night Out BLOCK Party

Our block is giving crime
a going away party!

When: Tuesday, August _____

Where: _____

Time: _____ to _____



Barbecue Potluck

Kids' Games

Fun Contests!



A visit from the
Salem Police Department
with treats for the kids!

Bring your lawn chairs and
join the neighborhood
for a fun time!



Please join us for our



We are celebrating Salem's night out
against crime with the
Salem Police Department!

When? Tuesday, August _____

Where? _____

Time? _____ to _____

For ideas about what to bring,
call _____

