



CAPS TIPS

*Brought to you by the Chicago Police Department
Your Partners for Safe Neighborhoods*

SAFE BUILDING TIPS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

One bad building can destroy a block; a bad block can destroy an entire neighborhood. To help break this cycle, the City has enacted the Gang and Drug House Ordinance. The ordinance, being enforced by the Police Department, the Department of Buildings and the Department of Law, contains new tools to deal with gang or drug problems in residential properties. Residents are vital to helping to prevent the negative impact bad buildings can have on the community. These tips are designed to help you deal with buildings that may attract criminal activity such as drugs or gang crime.

Identify Gang and Drug Houses.

Neighbors are the first people to recognize that a particular building is the site of repeated criminal activity. Look for signs of drug activity such as people driving up, making a quick exchange and leaving immediately. Be aware of groups of youth who openly identify themselves as gang members. Note disturbances, drive-by activities of rival gangs, or threatening behavior. Get good descriptions of the people hanging around, the kind of cars they drive, the license plate numbers, and where they live.

Report Information.

To take action against owners who allow criminal activity to occur in and around their buildings, the police and prosecutors need specific information. This information should include the address of the building, the type of illegal activity suspected, and as much information about the people involved in the activity as possible.

You can make reports of suspected criminal activity anonymously to your beat officer, gang/tactical officers or neighborhood relations office by calling your district police station. You can also call the City's Gang Hotline at **(312) 746-GANG** or the Drug Hotline at **(312) 939-5555**.

Participate in Court or Administrative Hearings.

You can help rid your neighborhood of gang and drug houses in many ways. While you can report observations anonymously, you can also provide evidence of criminal activity by testifying in court or administrative hearings. Evidence from neighbors is extremely useful in establishing a pattern of criminal activity at a bad building.

You can also send a strong message by becoming Court Advocacy volunteers and attending court or administrative hearings. It is vital that defendants -- including building owners -- judges, and hearing officers know that bad buildings affect the entire community.

Find out more about how you can get involved in making your neighborhood safer. Visit the CAPS home page on the World Wide Web at <http://cityofchicago.org> or call 311. Join the CAPS team of police officers, residents, and City Departments working together for a safer Chicago today.

City of Chicago
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