

## What Is the Building Rep Program? & What Does a Rep Do?

For those of you who are new to Parkside's **Building Rep / Neighborhood Watch Program** (and as a reminder for the rest of you), the overall purposes of the program are to

1. **Encourage neighbors to get to know each other and to help each other**, both in general and under special circumstances, such as damaging storms
2. **Help create and maintain community spirit**
3. **Promote greater security in our community through Neighborhood Watch.**

**Basic requirements** for a building rep include:

1. **Introducing yourself** to your neighbors and getting to know them
2. **Helping newcomers** with community procedures as needed, e.g., recycling or laundry machine operation; and
3. **Promoting community security** through Neighborhood Watch, including all the residents be familiar with **building rep letter** and to follow its suggestions and to be an extra set of "eyes and ears" for the community. (See below for more on the building rep "letter.") As a building rep, you are a **facilitator** for building residents.

A building rep does not have any authority over his or her neighbors, nor is there any heavy responsibility. You are not the police, nor are you a "house mother." You do not have to take on all responsibility for helping your neighbors take in papers or water plants when they travel, etc. Instead, encourage your neighbors to help each other and avoid overburdening yourself. And remember - you cannot force anyone else in your building to participate in cooperative building efforts; if any residents want to be left alone, leave them alone.

Beyond the basic requirements, if you have the time, energy, desire and imagination, and if your neighbors are willing, you can expand the program for your building. Some building reps promote building parties and potlucks. (Sometimes, several buildings get together to organize such an event.) Some building reps encourage the sharing of phone numbers among neighbors in a building so that they can more easily help each other. Car makes, colors, license numbers, etc. can be shared so that problems (such as lights left on) can be reported more easily. Especially energetic reps might take on nearby buildings which do not have their own building reps. Remember, though, these things may work well in some buildings and not in others. Each building will have its own set of individuals, each with his or her own sense of privacy and boundaries. Be careful not to pressure people who don't want to participate.

In most years, we hold a pizza party for all building reps in the fall. Because it is so difficult to keep track of how many building reps we have and who you are, we ask for confirmations from all reps as well as new sign-ups each fall.

The **building rep letter** is available on the Parkside Condominium web site which is full of safety and security tips for your neighbors. We want you to distribute them to everyone in your building. If your building has more than one building rep volunteer, only one will receive a full supply for the building. If we do not know which one of you is the main rep and which is the alternate, we will send the copies to one of you and you can discuss between/among yourselves how to distribute them. Perhaps you can go around together to introduce yourselves, hand out the letters, and get to know your neighbors, if you don't know them already.

All of the members of the Security Committee thank you so much for volunteering to be a building rep. You're performing an invaluable service for your community. And be sure to give us your ideas and suggestions for improving the program.