



CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



Bureau of Police

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Portland Police Bureau Combat Drug Houses How residents can help with a citizen-driven search warrant

Citizen-driven search warrant Q & A

Q: What is a citizen-driven search warrant?

A citizen-driven search warrant is initiated from information provided by neighbors to search a suspected drug house. Neighborhood Response Team (NRT) officers use this information, corroborated by their own observations, to produce an affidavit for a search warrant.

High levels of activity are not always indicators of illegal activity.

Neighbors who initiate actions may remain anonymous. You can talk to the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office and the Police Bureau and they will take steps to keep identities confidential.

Citizen-driven search warrants are designed for the misdemeanor charge of frequenting a drug house.

Q: What happens when I call the Drug House Complaint line?

- Callers are interviewed by a Drug and Vice Division (DVD) officer.
- Your complaint is logged into a database.
- A Drug House coordinator will conduct a preliminary investigation. This may consist of:
 - Police records check of the occupants.
 - Surveillance for illegal activity.
 - Warning letter to the property owner under the Chronic Nuisance ordinance.

Q: What is the Chronic Nuisance Ordinance?

PCC14B.60 is the City of Portland's Chronic Nuisance Ordinance. Police Bureau precincts are responsible for administering the Chronic Nuisance procedure. Common chronic nuisance activities involve drugs and prostitution, fights and alcohol issues.

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A warning letter may be sent after two documented activities. A letter declaring a property chronic nuisance may be sent after:

- A third chronic nuisance activity in a 30-day period.
- Continuous and ongoing drug and/or vice activity or a search warrant has been executed.

The property owner is directed to meet with a police representative to resolve the nuisance. Resolutions often include eviction of problem tenants, better screening procedures and remedying housing/code problems. A fine may be levied against a property owner, or their property may be boarded up for up to a year if the problem persists.

Q: Will cameras help secure a citizen-driven search warrant?

Photos (i.e., drug paraphernalia) and videotape may be helpful, but are not required. Videotape has restrictions on what can be lawfully recorded and should be used with caution.

Q: What should I expect?

- The precinct or DVD will usually begin a chronic nuisance process to resolve the problem.
- If the property owner is willing to evict tenants involved in drug activity, some drug houses may be resolved within months.
- Some drug houses may take a year or more to resolve. Closing down a drug house depends on such factors as:
 - Number of drug houses in the precinct.
 - Magnitude of the problem.
 - Ability of the police to corroborate the complaint.
- NRT officers should contact you within one to two days of executing the search warrant. The officers may be able to provide the following information:
 - Number of persons arrested.
 - Charges.
 - General information about seizures of drugs and weapons.
 - Probable short-term outcomes of jail status.

Your willingness to advocate for attention to the problem and track suspicious activity is key to helping eliminate the problem drug house.

Common signs of a drug house:

- Daily or hourly volume of auto and pedestrian traffic to the house.

- Length of time visitors stay.
- Presence of drug paraphernalia around the house.
- Hand-to-hand drug transactions.

Additional steps you can take:

- You can form a Neighborhood Watch or foot patrol.
- You can work with crime prevention coordinators and Neighborhood Response Team officers and learn how to document and report suspicious activity.

Neighborhood Response Team (NRT) officer:

- Works with neighbors to prepare citizen-driven search warrants.
- Works on livability and chronic nuisance complaints.

To reach your NRT officer, call your local precinct:

Central Precinct	503-823-0097
East Precinct	503-823-4800
North Precinct	503-823-2120
Northeast Precinct	503-823-5700
Southeast Precinct	503-823-2143

Office of Neighborhood Involvement

ONI offers a variety of neighborhood-based trainings:

- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
- Personal Safety
- Recognizing Drug Activity
- Landlord Training Program

For information, call: **503-823-4519**

Drug House Complaint Form

Complete on-line at:

<http://www.portlandonline.com/police/index.cfm?c=30740>

OR

Print the form, fill it out and mail it to the address below:

Portland Police Bureau
 Drug & Vice Division
 1111 S.W. 2nd Ave., Room 1430
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-823-0246 • FAX 503-823-0030