

# SAFETY TOOL BOX

**Working  
Together to  
Build Safe  
Communities**

WINNIPEG  
DEVELOPMENT  
AGREEMENT



ENTENTE SUR LE  
DÉVELOPPEMENT  
DE WINNIPEG



**Winnipeg  
Committee For  
Safety**



## Message from the Winnipeg Committee For Safety

Are you interested in participating in a crime prevention project? What is involved in improving safety in your neighbourhood? If you are asking these questions then please review the “tools” that are available in the Safety Tool Box and try conducting some of the enclosed projects in your neighbourhood.

The Safety Tool Box is a resource binder of activities (and information) that citizens or organizations can access and engage in. The “tools” outline step-by-step activities that you can follow to address local safety issues or implement projects. Other tools provide information on existing organizations that provide support such as telephone numbers of agencies or departments responsible for various community safety issues. There will be new tools developed and added over time.

Contact the Winnipeg Committee For Safety to ensure you are on our distribution list and we will provide you with new tools as they are completed or provide you with updated information. Please customize your Safety Tool Box binder with material or resources that you find helpful and please share these with the Committee and perhaps they can be shared with others.

The Winnipeg Committee For Safety initiated the Safety Tool Box Working Group, who have compiled, developed and prepared this resource. The Safety Tool Box Working Group is comprised of community members, organizations, and city representatives that have a commitment to improving safety in our city. A special thank-you is also in order for the Winnipeg Development Agreement - Urban Safety Program for support to help make this project a reality.

The Winnipeg Committee For Safety is always looking for feedback, so please call us at 986-7924 and let us know of your initiatives and of any suggestions to improve the Safety Tool Box.

Good luck with your safety initiatives!

Sincerely yours,



Councillor Jenny Gerbasi  
Chair, Winnipeg Committee for Safety



David Jopling  
Chair, Safety Tool Box Working Group



**Winnipeg  
Committee For  
Safety**



**WINNIPEG**

**SAFETY  
AUDIT  
Manual**

**Safety Tool Box** January 2001



**Winnipeg  
Committee for  
Safety**

**Please duplicate the Safety Audit Manual  
or Checklists as required.**



January 2001

\* The former Winnipeg Safe City Committee originally produced the Safety Audit Kit, modeled from METRAC's Women's Safety Audit Kit (Toronto, Ontario).

\*\* Thanks to the students and staff of the Production Art Program at Winnipeg Technical College for their participation in developing alternative designs of the Safety Audit Manual logo. Congratulations to Jennifer Hyde for submitting the winning design which is displayed above.

*To order a copy of the Safety Audit Manual, contact:*

The Committee Assistant for the Winnipeg Committee For Safety at **986-7924**

# Winnipeg Safety Audit Manual

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# I Introduction

## The Safety Issue

People should be able to go where they want free of fear, especially in their own neighbourhood. A large percentage of the population feels quite safe and secure at home or on the street but there are people who don't share these feelings. Those who feel their personal safety is threatened as they stand at a bus stop, walk down a street or in a public park may choose to avoid these areas altogether. In the end, their fear limits their freedom of activity and enjoyment.

A safety audit helps to establish a foundation for developing solutions to community problems and to respond to the need for a planned and reasonable safety strategy. This safety audit manual is a multiple-step reference manual for community members to follow when conducting a safety audit.

## II The Safety Audit

A safety audit is a summary of the good (safe) and bad (unsafe) parts of a place and becomes a report card on what needs to be maintained, improved and changed.

### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Safety audits are based on the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED (pronounced 'sep'-ted') recognizes the relationship between how space is designed and used, and the real or perceived feeling of safety of the user of that space. CPTED methods help to prevent crime by identifying things in an area that should be changed to create positive human behavior and also increase safe activities. CPTED improves the "comfort" of the area for the users.

Basically what CPTED means is that safe neighbourhoods can be created, and that people who take an interest in maintaining their property, parks and public spaces using CPTED do develop a safer neighbourhood.



CPTED builds on the following key principles:

- A well-maintained area expresses a sense of ownership and people tend to protect an area that they feel belongs to them.
- An area that has people watching and reporting suspicious activity has few obstacles that block the view of casual observers.
- An area that has distinguishable entrances and exits (between private and public space) will help to keep potential criminals from entering.
- Encouraging activity in public spaces helps to discourage crime and disorder. An area that is busy increases the feeling of safety.

Each of these principles overlaps with one another and when combined, can increase safety. Keep these principles in mind when you are conducting your audit.



### **The Safety Audit Manual**

The safety audit manual provides seven steps to follow - from initiating the process to identifying and recommending improvements. As well, the safety audit manual includes information on the following topics and resources:

- How to organize a safety audit team
- Tips on who to involve in the process
- Checklists to help gather information
- What to look-out for
- How to organize your findings
- How to prepare a report
- Tools to help implement recommended changes

A safety audit process is a way of identifying and making desired changes to improve public safety. It is a way to help to reduce crime and build confidence in the community.



### III The Safety Audit Process

The safety audit process continues beyond the organization of a Safety Audit Team and a completion of the site evaluation. It involves developing recommendations and submitting a letter and report to those responsible for making changes and improvements. Follow-up contact is necessary to ensure changes have been implemented.

Participating in a safety audit can have many benefits:

- Reducing the feeling of fear in your community
- Increasing the feeling of safety in your community
- Reducing the opportunity for crime to occur
- Increasing community pride and ownership
- Creating partnerships between community interests
- Increasing participation in local programs
- Providing an opportunity to get to know your neighbours
- Building relationships between residents and government staff

The steps in a safety audit process are outlined on the next page.

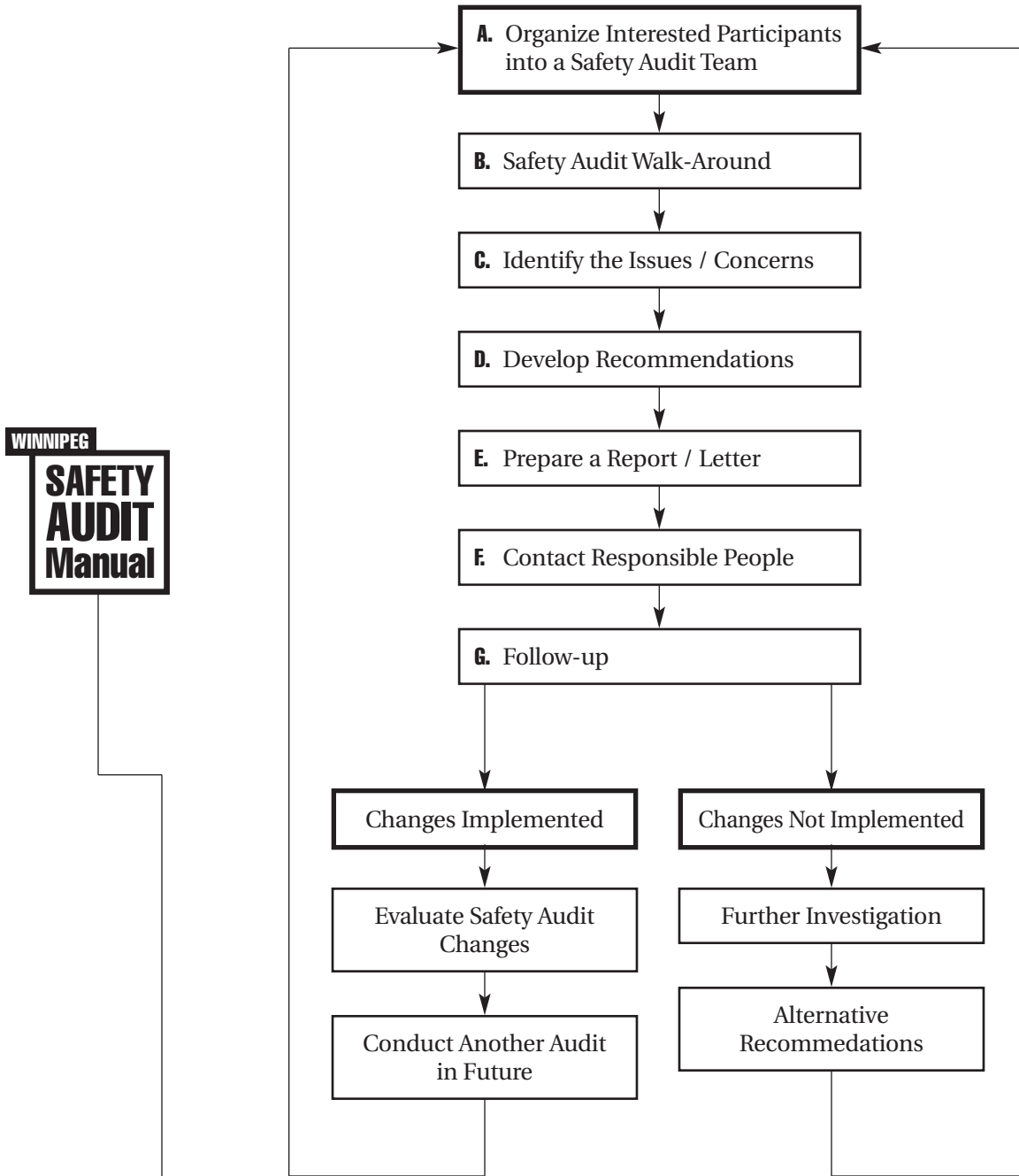
#### **Safety Audit Assistance**

A Winnipeg Police Service Volunteer will assist you in planning your safety audit. The Winnipeg Police Service Community Services Officers train the police volunteers in conducting safety audits. The volunteers will share their experience with your safety audit team if you require assistance.

If your safety audit team would like the opportunity of working with a police volunteer, please contact the Winnipeg Police Service Coordinator of Community Volunteers at 986-3265.



## The Safety Audit Process



## **A. Organize Interested Participants into a Safety Audit Team**

When organizing a safety audit, include others who may share the same concerns and can help get improvements made. Host an initial meeting to generate interest and commitment to conducting a safety audit. You need to determine a particular geographic area of concern and a date and time to conduct the audit. Invite a variety of people, including the people responsible for rental and commercial properties as they may also have safety concerns.

Also, you may include:

- Neighbours, friends, and/or co-workers
- Local business owners and landlords
- Members of social, religious or recreational organizations
- Local women's centres or organizations
- Senior citizen's associations
- Neighbourhood Watch members, Block Parents, and/or Citizens for Crime Awareness members
- Tenants or residents groups
- Security staff
- Local business owners/operators
- Student groups and youth groups
- Community Police Officer or Foot Patrol Officer
- City Councillor, MLA, or MP
- City of Winnipeg staff
- Persons with disabilities and/or representatives of accessibility organizations
- School trustee, school administration or parent council representatives
- Reporter from a community newspaper or other media person.

### ***Make an effort to involve youth!***

Young people are an important part of our community now and in the future. They are a source of good ideas, enthusiasm and a fresh perspective.



## Area and Scope of Study

Determine the amount of time and energy that you can devote to the safety audit process. Start small and don't attempt to do too large of an area. A few suggestions for types of areas to audit include:

- A specific area that makes you feel unsafe or threatened
- An entire neighbourhood from the point of view of one or two factors such as lighting and/or sightlines
- A full audit of one street block
- Your route to and from your bus stop, local recreation area, workplace, etc.
- Areas that concern you the most, such as washrooms, parking lots, parkades, stairways, parks, tunnels, etc.

## When to Conduct an Audit

Sometimes a place or area causes you more concern early in the morning, in the middle of the afternoon, or on a certain day of the week. Therefore, the time of day when a person may feel the most isolated and the least safe would be chosen as one of the times for a safety audit. Audits are often done after dark. Nighttime would be the only time to find out if there is a problem with outdoor lighting - a very important safety feature!

Conduct the safety audit in a small group(s) and audit the same location more than once. You can then see what it is like at different times of the day, week, or year. Remember to inform your local police officers of the date and time you plan to conduct your audit.

## Prepare for the Safety Audit

Host a meeting to organize the thoughts and concerns of the audit group, and to plan your route(s). Conduct the audit in small teams - DO NOT DO IT ALONE. Bring things that will make your experience more comfortable, such as a:

- photocopied checklist and clipboard
- pen/pencil and extra paper
- flashlight
- camera, video camera, or tape recorder
- copy of a map or sketch one
- tape measure to find exact measurements
- and, dress appropriately for the weather conditions



*Read through this next section before beginning the safety audit walk-around.*

## **B. Safety Audit Walk-Around**

### **Ask the Right Questions**

Start by using your own experience. Think about the place that you have chosen to audit and consider what bothers you about it. Begin by asking yourself the following questions:

- Why don't I like this place?
- When and why do I feel uncomfortable here?
- What changes would make me feel safer?

Other important questions include:

- What is this space intended to be used for?
- How is it actually being used?
- Who is intended to use this space?
- Who actually uses it?
- Do things like landscaping, structures or lighting encourage the use of the space for its intended purpose? Do they get in the way?

Remember, people may look at space in different ways, so there may be many options and answers to these questions.

Read over the safety audit General Site Checklist, at the end of this manual, prior to conducting the walk-around. This Checklist is helpful because it includes many factors to consider that may be overlooked otherwise. Taking the time to consider every item on the checklist may help you to assess a location more fully and become aware of some factors that may not have originally occurred to you.



## C. Identify the Issues/Concerns

During the safety audit, take good notes. All the points in the checklist may not be relevant to your site. Feel free to skip-over sections you don't feel are important to your site. You can also add points when necessary.

*Record all information during your safety audit and decide later if the information will be useful or not.*

### Tips to Follow

- If you are auditing a large area, divide the task into sections and deal with each section one at a time. For example, if you are auditing a large apartment complex, you may wish to complete a separate checklist for each floor, one for the area surrounding the apartment and one for the parking facility. This will produce a more manageable package that will represent your concerns more clearly.
- Be as specific as possible about locations. For example, underground parking lots often number each parking spot. You can use these numbering systems to identify the exact location you are commenting on.
- Sketch a map of a site to record specific details. Include street addresses, North arrow ↗, label landmarks or existing reference points, develop a legend, code the location of problems and others details that you feel are important. See page 21, for an example of a sketch map.
- When using a camera to document areas, use a numbered logbook to record the photos, indicating where and when the photo was taken. When the photos are developed, label each one from the logbook to identify it.
- Identify positive features or qualities of a site when auditing an area to use as good examples in the recommendations.
- You may want to talk to people you see during the audit and ask them their concerns of the site.



## D. Develop Recommendations

After completing the safety audit, you will have a lot of information. There will also probably be a lot of ideas about how to improve the area's safety. Hold a meeting to outline your team's findings.

When developing your recommendations, consider:

- Providing various solutions, perhaps indicating how the responsible person or party could improve the area in stages
- Contacting available community resources that you feel can give you answers or ideas on changes
- Identifying the most cost-effective changes you feel can improve or address the problem
- Attaching copies of the checklist, maps and/or photographs
- Rating the recommendations as 'most important' (primary) and 'less important' (secondary)
- Proposing programs that you feel should be created
- Identifying positive features as examples

Remember that some problems are not easy to solve. Don't be restricted to common solutions and invent new solutions if you feel they will be more effective.

## E. Prepare a Report

Look over your notes after completing the audit and fill in details as they are still fresh in your mind. Compile the material into a short report as soon as possible. Think about who might read this report and don't assume they are familiar with the area or the process you have followed. After a day or two, read over the report to see if it is clear enough and still makes sense. Have someone, particularly a person who didn't take part in the audit, read it over. They will let you know if your recommendations are clear. Remember to include maps and pictures if you have any, and refer to them in your report.

Use the Safety Audit Report Summary/Action Charts on pages 14 & 15 to help organize your thoughts and outline the steps and actions that your safety audit team needs to complete.



## F. Contact Responsible Persons

Divide the safety audit recommendations among the audit team members. The team members will then be responsible for following-up each of the specific tasks, until changes are completed.

Inform property owners/operators of your safety concerns by sending them a letter and/or report. They are the people who have a responsibility for making changes. Set up an in-person meeting with them to discuss the issues once they have had time to look over your report. Determine a reasonable time that the property owner/operator would need to make recommended changes.

See page 19 for a Sample Letter to a property owner/operator outlining concerns or safety issues on their property. See page 20 for a blank sample of a Report Summary Chart.

## G. Follow-Up

Once the property owner/operator has had time to make changes, visit the site to see if the changes have occurred. Sometimes it may take a few phone calls to get an owner/operator of a property to take action and make changes.

*If a recommendation has not been implemented,* can you identify another way to deal with the problem? Meet with the property owner/operator and work together to identify alternatives that would be acceptable to both of you.



## IV Evaluation

Evaluation is a big part of achieving success and making a difference. A self-evaluation can be conducted on the affect of your safety audit. You cannot measure the success of a safety audit simply by implementing the proposed changes. You must determine if the changes have addressed the reasons for the recommended changes.

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) has produced an evaluation manual entitled “Step by Step: Evaluating Your Community Crime Prevention Efforts.”<sup>[1]</sup> It is a valuable resource that can be used to help guide you through an evaluation process.

A list of some examples of measurable qualities to help indicate whether your efforts have had an affect:

- Amount and type of media coverage
- Victimization rates
- Crime rates and types
- Level of fear of crime or feelings of safety among residents
- Number of calls for police service
- Number of residents involved in community development activities
- Number of residents using streets and public spaces
- Level of awareness of crime prevention project
- Level of participation in crime prevention project
- Degree of cleanliness and maintenance of the physical environment
- Extent of activities that involve local youth
- Extent of vandalism and graffiti

Remember to share your experiences with others.



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<sup>[1]</sup> Contact the Public Safety Branch of Manitoba Justice or visit your local City of Winnipeg library for a copy of the “Step By Step” manual.



## V Helpful Tools

The following resources can be used to help you in various steps in the safety audit process. Some are for helping your Safety Audit Team organize your findings and the other tools are for helping to prepare a clear and concise report to effectively identify and implement recommendations.

1. Safety Audit Report Summary/Action Chart
2. Safety Audit Action Task Sheet
3. Meeting Schedule and Agenda Task Examples
4. Sample Letter
5. Safety Audit Report Summary
6. Site Sketch Example
7. Common Recommendations

**Duplicate  
any of these  
pages as  
needed.**

### 1. The Safety Audit Report Summary / Safety Audit Action Chart

An action chart can be a helpful tool to organize findings and keep track of progress. Use the action chart to summarize the issues, recommendations, and outline the process you will follow to implement changes. The chart summarizes a lot of information in a brief, easy-to-read format.

Within the action chart, indicate a time period to help you set a realistic goal to follow over the next few weeks/months to implement the safety audit recommendations. Remember that it will take time to complete each step. The following details should be included in the action chart:

- A reference number attached to the issue
- Rank the importance you place on the issue (use two or three groupings, e.g., primary, secondary,...)
- Summarize the issue briefly but clearly
- Identify the specific location of the problem
- Indicate your recommendation

The action chart can help the audit team track action or inaction for each of the issues by identifying:

- Safety audit group members responsible for pursuing the issue
- Safety audit group members doing the follow-up contact
- The person (or group) to be contacted who are responsible for the changes
- A realistic time period for each activity & summarizing action(s) taken



## **2. Safety Audit Action Task Sheet**

The Safety Audit Action Task Sheet is for Safety Audit Team Members to record contact dates and details of discussions with people as they are pursuing the implementation of recommendations.

## **3. Meeting Schedule and Agenda Task Examples**

The safety audit process will require a number of meetings for the Safety Audit Team to organize and support one another in the process. This sheet outlines some examples of the topics that would need to be included in typical meetings. Try to develop an agenda for each meeting to ensure discussions keep focussed. Remember to ask Safety Audit Team Members if there should be anything added to the agenda prior to the meeting.

## **4. Sample Letter**

Write a letter to the person or organization responsible for changes. Sometimes a telephone call will not get the response that a letter will. Keep the letter brief and include details in an attached report.

## **5. Safety Audit Report Summary**

If many of the issues identified seem to be the responsibility of one person/organization, then use the report summary portion of the chart to summarize the details and submit it as a final report. See page 20 for a blank sample of the Report Summary Chart.

## **6. Site Sketch Example**

See page 21 for a sample of a site sketch and legend.

## **7. Common Recommendations**

A reference list of common recommendations that may be useful to refer to when you have completed your safety audit. Depending upon the issues and circumstances, it is best to determine recommendations that specifically address the issues relevant to your community. Be innovative and identify alternative recommendations. Don't be restricted to this list.



## Action Chart

### Report Summary

Ref No.	Issue or Concern	Specific Location	Recommendation	Rank	Responsible Party to Contact	Audit Team Member Responsible	Time Period (Date)	Action Taken & Date or Next Step
1	Youth loitering daily	South west corner of school building	Approach youth to determine their interests	A	Safety Audit Team	Carol, Madison, & Lawrence	1 week	Progress ongoing
2			Develop activities that the kids would be interested in participating	A	City of Winnipeg Recreation Dept. & Community Club	Carol & Madison	6 months	Progress ongoing
3	Tall shrubs creating potential hiding spot	North east corner of school playground	Trim shrubs to the maximum height of 2.5 ft. or 76 centimetres	A	School Principal	Trevor	2 weeks	Progress unknown
4	Payphone out of order	South east corner of 1st St. and 3rd Ave.	Make necessary repairs	A	MTS	Madison	1 week	Phone repairs completed
5	Tree branches blocking street light	South east corner of playground	Trim tree branches to allow light to shine through	B	Hydro or City of Winnipeg	Lawrence	2 weeks	Progress unknown
6	Broken glass	Near play structure	Clean up glass	A	Safety Audit Team member	Carol	Tomorrow	Glass cleaned up
7			Develop school policy for someone to survey playground each morning	B	School Principal	Trevor	1 month	Progress ongoing
8	Graffiti on school	South east side of school	Immediately remove all graffiti	A	School Principal or City of Winnipeg	Lori	1 week	Graffiti removed
9			Develop educational program for students to deter graffiti	B	School Principal, Winnipeg Police Service	Lori & Trevor	3 months	



# Action Task Sheet

Audit Team Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Call/Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person or Organization Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Call/Contact: *(Note Reference Number to Audit Report)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Location of Particular Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic of Discussion/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Contact Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion Details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Example Meeting Schedule and Agenda Tasks

A few working meetings will make the safety audit process informative, fun and productive. Prepare an agenda for each meeting to help direct your focus.

## *1st Meeting*

### **Introduction and Planning**

- Welcome & Introductions
- Summarize reason for this meeting: ie getting a safety audit done in the area
- Introduce Safety Audit Manual and the process (invite a Police Volunteer, Safety Co-ordinator or knowledgeable person)
- Discussion of safety concerns in the local area and the safety audit process
- Determine the focus/priority and how the Safety Audit will be conducted
- Determine area or site of the Safety Audit
- Determine dates & times for doing the Safety Audit
- Outline tasks & persons responsible (eg. someone to prepare a site sketch/map, and someone to have audit checklists copied.)
- Set Next Meeting Date, Time & Location

## *2nd Meeting*

### **Conducting the Safety Audit**

- Introductions
- Read through Section B of the Safety Audit Manual
- Outline boundaries of Safety Audit
- Divide group into teams of two or three persons
- Conduct site visit/walkaround
- Record as much detail as possible (as per Audit Manual Checklist)
- Meet back at an agreed location
- Finish recording the details of the audit area and briefly review information
- Set Next Meeting Date, Time & Location



### *3rd Meeting*

#### **Summary of information and noting recommendations**

- Introductions
- Summarize & discuss issues/concerns identified from the walkaround
- Complete the Safety Audit Report/Action Chart Summary
- Develop a Recommendation for each issue (or identify someone that may help)
- Identify the team members responsible for follow-up on each issue
- Identify the responsible people or organization to contact regarding the issue
- Determine a reasonable time period to pursue recommendations
- Determine a report format or structure to contact responsible people
- Set Next Meeting Date, Time & Location

### *4th Meeting*

#### **Review, update, follow-up**

- Review the report and give an update on the action and responses
- Determine if more meetings are necessary to complete the follow-up process
- Give each other a pat on the back!



# Sample Letter

*Date*

*Property Owner/Operators Name*

*Address*

*City, Province*

*Postal Code*

Dear .....*Name of Property Owner/Operator*

**RE: Safety Audit Results of .....*Area/Address***

A concerned group of local volunteers recently conducted a safety audit of this area. On behalf of the team I am pleased to be able to share the results with you and provide some recommendations to improve safety in and around your property.

A safety audit is a summary of the good (safe) and bad (unsafe) parts of a place and becomes a report card on what needs to be maintained or should be changed and improved. The safety audit process is one way of directly increasing crime prevention in the community, often with small changes and very little effort!

We have identified the following concerns during a safety audit of your area and have suggested some ways of addressing them.

- 1.
2. *Insert the concerns and suggestions for taking action*
- 3.

If you need more information or want to discuss the safety audit in detail please call me at ....*phone number*. I trust that you will support our efforts for a safe city and will do what you can to address the concerns identified. Lets work together to improve safety in our neighbourhood.

Yours truly,

....*Name*, Safety Audit Team Leader

....*Address & Postal Code*



**Winnipeg  
Committee For  
Safety**



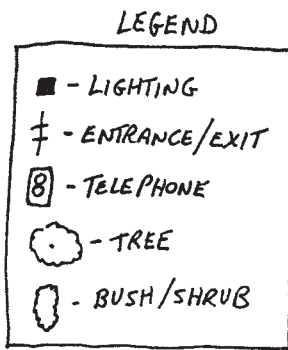
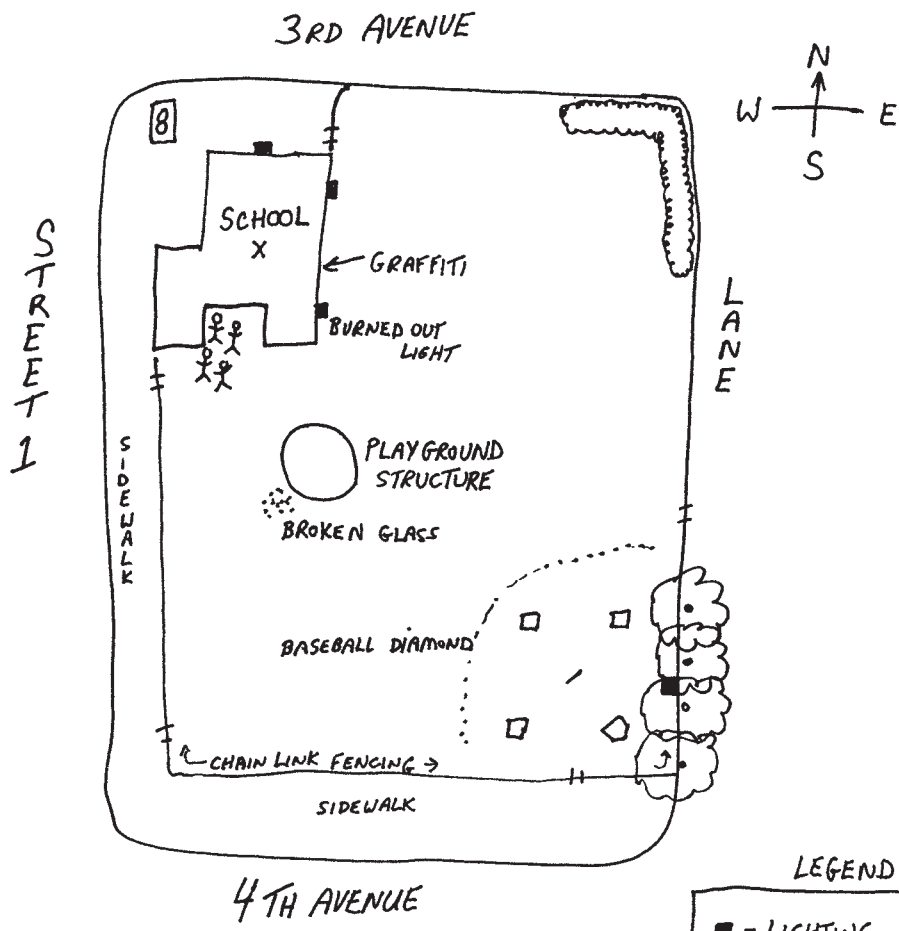
Audit Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Safety Audit Report Summary

Ref No.	Issue or Concern	Specific Location	Recommendation	Discussion and Details



## Site Sketch Example



REMEMBER TO INCLUDE IN THE SKETCH:

- A LEGEND (LABEL ALL SYMBOLS)
- NORTH ARROW
- STREET NAMES
- USE COLOURED HIGHLIGHTS TO IDENTIFY PROBLEM SPOTS
- LABEL BUILDINGS + IMPORTANT LANDMARKS
- LABEL ISSUES/PROBLEMS



## Common Recommendations

- Develop programming and activities at your local community club for children/youth
- Host a block party or organize a neighbourhood clean-up day
- With the owner's permission, involve children and youth to paint a mural on a bare wall that is plagued by graffiti
- Remove clutter from storefront windows
- Install lighting in recessed doorway
- Leave light turned-on all evening
- Alter fencing to be more transparent
- Identify play area improvements and seek funding source
- Trim hedge to the height of 2.5 feet (76 centimetres) to eliminate a hiding spot
- Trim tree branches (especially coniferous trees) to the height of 5 feet (or 152 centimetres) from the ground on all tall trees
- Plant prickly shrubs in areas you do not want people to go (e.g. under windows that open)
- Install mirror in stairwell or on sharp blind corner
- Plant shrubbery or vines against walls to prevent graffiti and vandalism
- Improve/install signage (size of letters, directional)
- Plant low shrubs along front property line to provide clear border definition of private space
- Clearly mark transition zones between public to semi-private to private space
- Clean-up garbage, paint and repair fencing
- Remove graffiti quickly
- Change burned out light bulb or increase wattage

*Don't be restricted by this list.  
Apply your own ideas.*















