

# CRIME PREVENTION

**WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT CRIME****NEWSLETTER**

## Shopping Spree

Have you ever been in any of these scenarios? There is a sale at the mall. You go and buy a brand new laptop and different clothing items from the mall. You put it in the back seat and decide to do a quick trip to the supermarket. Within five minutes, you return from the grocery store and your window is smashed and your brand new laptop and clothing are stolen.

In another scenario, you come across a heavily discounted electronic item online. Feeling excited, you contemplate buying it from a website you've never heard before. With timers counting down on the page, you don't want to miss out on this deal, so you decide to purchase the item. The item never arrives and you start to see unauthorized payments on your credit card statement.

There are necessary steps you can take to avoid these situations as they will only lead to disappointment. Autumn sales, Black Friday, and Boxing Day are all coming in the next few months. Whether you are shopping in-store or online, stay vigilant and remind yourself of the following tips.

### In-Store Shopping

When you're shopping at the mall and your hands are full, it might seem convenient to drop off the bags to the car and return to the stores. However, this approach is not effective in preventing theft. An observant thief could notice you putting items in the car, providing them with an opportunity to steal. It is safer to finish your shopping before stowing away your purchases. If you are coming from another location and you have items in the car already, make sure they are out of sight before you head to your next destination. Commonly stolen items include personal electronics, backpacks, cash, keys, garage remotes, wallets, and jackets. Losing these items could lead to more serious crimes like break-ins, identity theft, or fraud.

### Online Shopping

During holiday seasons, phishing attempts through social media and emails increase significantly. To protect yourself, start by researching and comparing prices on reputable websites. Always be skeptical of deals that seem too good to be true. Scammers often create ads that look similar to legitimate websites, using countdown timers or phrases like "limited time offer" to create a false sense of urgency. This is to capture your sense of excitement and eagerness, and limit your time to research. If you fall for their trap, they could steal your personal information and/or money.



Additionally, strengthen your online security by creating unique passwords, activating multifactor authenticators, and adjusting your privacy settings. Always use a secure connection and avoid using public WiFi for online shopping, as tech savvy thieves may be lurking on public connections.

## Reduce Crime in Your Apartment Community

Thieves are targeting apartment buildings due to several factors: easy access, hidden spots, blurred lines between public and private spaces, poor lighting, and landscaping that offers concealment. To mitigate these risks, a comprehensive risk assessment needs to be done to identify, analyze, and evaluate potential threats. Once identified, follow up by implementing targeted physical security measures. The goal extends beyond protecting properties from theft; it also includes deterring unwanted visitors and preventing illegal occupation of spaces.

When formulating a security strategy, it is essential to recognize that the design of the built environment can shape residents' perceptions of crime risk, often amplifying feelings of fear beyond actual threat levels. Incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles foster ongoing improvements in community safety, protection, and quality of life. It encourages the establishment of spaces that allow residents to assert control over their surroundings and enhance the sense of security within residential areas, making potential offenders more conscious of the likelihood of being observed or confronted.

A CPTED-informed residential security strategy combines modifications to the physical environment with community engagement, fostering social cohesion and participation for a safer living environment.



By working together, neighbours can increase the security and safety of their homes and neighbourhood, by following these tips:

- Do not let anyone you don't know into your building.
- Always confirm who is calling from the intercom before buzzing someone into the building.
- Watch the parking garage gate close completely before driving off when you are entering or leaving.
- Get to know other residents so you know who belongs. Start by just saying hi to people inside the elevator or when walking past one another in the parkade.
- Do not put your full name on the intercom panel.
- Let the property manager know immediately if you lose your key fob so they can deactivate it.
- Lock up your bike even if it is stored inside a secured bike room.
- Always lock your storage unit. If your storage unit is cage-style and your building permits, use sheets or panels to obscure what is inside.
- Meet delivery person downstairs, do not just buzz them into the building.



## Preparing for Festivities

This quarter is filled with holidays and festive seasons. You may be using this time to celebrate with friends and family or you may be putting up decorations in preparation of the festivities. While you are preparing for festivities, make improvements to your home, and remind friends and family to take precautions to prevent crime. These improvements can make a huge difference in crime prevention and safety.



- ◆ Make sure all doors and windows are locked and closed properly. Do not run wires from the interior to exterior decorations.
- ◆ When putting up decorations, trim the trees and hedges in front of your house to remove hiding spots and increase natural surveillance.
- ◆ Improve lighting around your home. Add motion sensor lights and pair them with working security cameras.
- ◆ Remind guests to not leave items in their vehicles and to lock the door when entering your home.
- ◆ If you are not home, turn on your alarms and add timers for your lights. Ask a neighbour to look after your home by picking up mail or packages and clearing the leaves from the driveway.

## To Start a Block Watch Group

Interested in starting a Block Watch group? Let us tell you a little about Block Watch! Block Watch is a program that brings the police and the community together. This program helps you build connections and relationships with people in your neighbourhood and the police while striving for the common goal of crime prevention.

### Select a Captain/Co-Captain

- ◇ Each Captain/Co-Captain has to submit an application and will be contacted for a suitability interview. Candidates will then need to complete a free Police Information Check.

### Recruit and build your group

- ◇ Upon confirmation from the Block Watch office on completing and passing all required steps in becoming a Captain/Co-Captain, you may begin to recruit homes that are near to you with the provided recruiting materials from the Block Watch office. To build an effective Block Watch, try to involve 50-75% of households in your area.

### Complete activation of your team

1. **Complete** Block Watch Captain/Participant training – invite everyone in your group to participate in a virtual/in-person training session.
2. **Submit** your participating household list.
3. **Qualify** for Block Watch street signs once the above steps are completed.

If you are interested in creating a Block Watch group in your area, email us your name and address at [blockwatch@richmond.ca](mailto:blockwatch@richmond.ca) or call 604-207-4829.

# BUSINESS LINK

## WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT CRIME

## NEWSLETTER

### Steps for Reporting

It is an intimidating sight when you return to your business and see that it has been broken into. Many thoughts could be going through your head such as “Who do I call?” and “What can I do?”. Different businesses have their own protocols in regards to break and enter, but the common practice when arriving to a crime scene is the same. Review the proper protocols with your workplace, learn what numbers to call, and what to do in this situation. Below we answer these tough questions so you won't panic if ever faced with this situation.



### Who do I call?

The first call is to report the incident to the police. The number to call depends on when you discover the break-in. For example, if you find out about it the day after it happened, you should call the non-emergency line, however, if the alarm or camera alerts notify you while the crime is in progress, you should call 911. If you're an employee, you may also need to contact the business owner or manager, as they have access to serial numbers, camera footage, and other valuable information for investigations or follow-ups.

### What can I do?

Your first instinct might be to clean up the property, but doing so can disturb the scene and contaminate evidence. Avoid walking in areas the suspect may have accessed and do not touch anything, as there may be footprints or fingerprints present. After you report the crime, ask the call taker to clarify your next steps such as what can be cleaned. Make a list of the stolen items and find serial numbers associated with the stolen items if applicable. If a manager or business owner has inventory documents, ask them to provide it as it may help with identification. Provide the police with both the surveillance footage and the list of stolen items. Afterward, evaluate the security of the business; the assigned officer can offer valuable advice on enhancing security measures.

#### **Please report all suspicious or criminal activity to the police.**

Richmond RCMP Non-Emergency line **604-278-1212**. If you witness a crime in progress, dial **9-1-1**.

Online reporting available at [bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/richmond/report](https://bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/richmond/report) for the following:

- Damage/mischief to property under \$5,000
- Damage/mischief to a vehicle under \$5,000
- Hit and run to an unoccupied vehicle or property
- Theft of bicycle under \$5,000
- Theft under \$5,000
- Theft from vehicle under \$5,000
- Lost property

