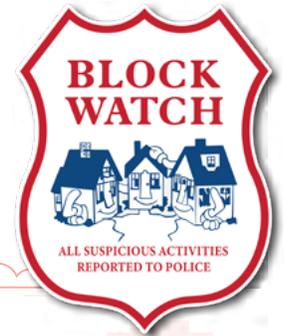




# BLOCK WATCH

Captain/Co-Captain & Participant Guide



Working Together To Build Safer Neighbourhoods

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*Dear Block Watch member,*

*We are pleased to welcome you and your home to the Block Watch program. Currently, there are over 50,000 participating households across the province of British Columbia. Your local Block Watch Office places importance on its relationship with you and your safety and is offering this program to support you.*

*Whether you are getting involved in Block Watch because your area is experiencing serious issues, an increase in crime or you simply want to live in a connected community, Block Watch brings neighbours together under a common purpose – community safety. As a citizen living in your community, you are the eyes and ears that help inform authorities about what is happening in your neighbourhood by reporting and communicating.*

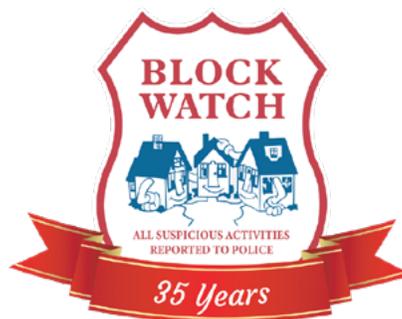
*Block Watch is step one in what can be a multi-tiered approach to bring safety directly to your home. Of course, Block Watch cannot stop crime but practicing the teachings can reduce or deter it. Proactive citizens can use the education, awareness, advocacy and empowerment, offered by their local Block Watch Office as a catalyst to help lead or create change.*

*Your local Block Watch Office staff look forward to working with you to help you and your neighbours to create a safer and more connected neighbourhood or complex.*

*Thank you for being involved in community safety.*

*Sincerely,*

*Block Watch Society of BC*



The Block Watch Society of British Columbia would like to thank our sponsors, the Province of British Columbia, ICBC and the Vancouver Police Foundation. Their support was instrumental for the printing and distribution of this guide. We also would like to acknowledge and give our gratitude to the Vancouver Police Department and its members for their input and time in the creation of this guide.

## ABOUT BLOCK WATCH

The Block Watch program is not a new concept and was originally established in Seattle in 1973. Since then, the program has developed to be an effective community-based safety and crime prevention program. Block Watch is about neighbours looking out for neighbours through communication.

Historically, police have used a reactive style of law enforcement. In other words, they responded to your complaints. A growing population and other factors have made clear the value of engaging and working with the public more than ever.

As a result, community policing evolved in an effort to reduce crime collaboratively using education and support. In 1986, this model of community policing led to the development of Block Watch.

Block Watch Society of BC programs are operated by either a police department, municipal agency or Indigenous Office. Staffing structures vary but usually consist of one coordinator which may be a police officer or a civilian and in some offices, one or more assistant coordinators.

To have an effective team it is important to be aware of what is happening in your neighbourhood. To help, your Block Watch Office will provide guidance, education and information. Active participation in the program is the key to its success.

In this guide, we will cover a range of topics including how to start and maintain your Block Watch, how to recognize suspicious activity, characteristics of a property crime thief, what to do or not do when a police dog attends, what to do with evidence as well as how and when to report incidents to police.

Block Watch promotes increased feelings of neighbourhood security and helps build a stronger sense of community.

A Block Watch can be set up in residential areas, apartments, condominiums, townhouse complexes, mobile home sites as well as rural communities.

When neighbours work together, they can reduce crime in their area in the most effective way – before it starts.

**Congratulations on your commitment to your community.  
Every successful Block Watch program needs neighbours like you!**



# WHAT IS BLOCK WATCH ALL ABOUT?

## What Block Watch Is:

### Block Watch is community partnerships.

The program brings police and communities together in their common goal of community safety. When a neighbourhood or complex gets involved with the program they become the trained eyes and ears of their neighbourhood to recognize suspicious activity and how to effectively report it.

### Bringing neighbourhoods together.

Block Watch connects people, builds relationships and creates a strong sense of community where people know who their neighbours are and can look out for one another.

**Block Watch is an extension** of what you may already be doing. Many of us have watched our neighbour's home while they have been away. Under Block Watch, that watchfulness is broadened and becomes more systematic. All residents on a block get to know each other through participation and communication.

**Block Watch involves being alert** to your surroundings as part of your everyday life and talking to your neighbours to keep them aware of current crime prevention techniques and local crime trends.

### The Program involves two commitments:

- (1) Being concerned about your neighbour's property as you would your own.
- (2) Reporting suspicious or criminal activity to the police and to your neighbours.

## What Block Watch Is Not:

Block Watch does not require you to perform special tasks or go to a lot of meetings.

You do not patrol the neighbourhood or chase burglars.

You are not required to tell your neighbours everything about yourself and socialize with them on a regular basis. You can still conduct your life in privacy.

Block Watch isn't just for homeowners. The tips and techniques are equally valuable to your neighbours who may be renting.

#### **Block Watch Society Disclaimer:**

*Block Watch has always been about joining neighbourhoods and police in an inclusive way, to the benefit of all. The principle of non-discrimination seeks to guarantee that human rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status such as disability, age, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social situation.*







## BLOCK WATCH ROLES

There are three roles that form a Block Watch team, Captain, Co-Captain and Participant.

### **Captain/Co-Captain**

As a Block Watch leader you should have a genuine interest in preventing crime in your neighbourhood and/or complex. You will need to be available to listen to and communicate with the participants in your group. In order to be a Captain/Co-Captain you should have a good understanding of Block Watch and be comfortable promoting it to your neighbours.

The primary function of the Captain is to set up communication between the neighbours and serve as the link between them and the Block Watch Office. A Captain should be comfortable using email and the internet. The Block Watch Captain or Co-Captain are not responsible for keeping crime off the block, patrolling the area or for keeping everyone's house keys when they vacation.

Serving as a Captain is not time consuming and you do not have to be home at all times to volunteer. Captains and Co-Captains don't have to perform all their duties alone. Engage your neighbours.

### **What's the difference between a Captain and Co-Captain?**

Whenever we refer to a 'Captain' it will always, by default, include the 'Co-Captain.' The duties are interchangeable and decided between you, as the training is the same.

The Captain is the person who is ultimately responsible for the active status and maintenance of the group.



# CAPTAIN/CO-CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Captains and Co-Captains work together to:

- Build your team.
- Liaise between the Block Watch Office and your participating households.
- Maintain and submit an active Participating Household list and/or map in the time frame required by your Block Watch program. You are not an active group until the Block Watch Office receives a copy of your list and/or map. Ask the Block Watch Office for marketing materials like Block Watch brochures, decals, posters and 'invitations.'
- Communicate and share suspicious occurrences and crime incidents with your team. We suggest email primarily but you can also consider using a social media platform such as a private Facebook group, text or chat group. It's quite simple to set up a group email list in your chosen email provider.
- Provide your participants with a Block Watch newsletter which contains updates on crime trends and crime prevention tips provided to you by your Block Watch Office. You can create your own or you can use the one at [www.blockwatch.com](http://www.blockwatch.com).
- Organize a Block Party or team meeting each year to help keep your neighbours connected.
- Identify a Captain replacement when you resign and ensure they complete the application process.

## Set Your Boundaries

Being the leader of a Block Watch, your neighbours can bring a variety of neighbourhood issues to you which fall outside of your role as a Captain/Co-Captain, e.g., "can you get the city to install a traffic light?" or "my neighbour's trees are encroaching on my property, can you speak with them?" These are NOT YOUR responsibilities. Captains/Co-Captains may choose to take on initiatives that bring safety or build community such as, requesting traffic calming or additional street lighting from your municipality, but it is not your responsibility to deal with neighbourhood issues or conflicts.





# BUILDING YOUR BLOCK WATCH

You have decided to start a Block Watch or you need to re-activate an established group. How do you go about involving other residents in your neighbourhood to join?

To build an effective Block Watch, try to involve approximately 50-75% of households in your approved area. If you have a difficult time reaching this goal, contact your Block Watch Office.

Some neighbourhoods and complexes struggle with getting residents involved. If you are having difficulties or concerns about a residence which may be involved in criminal activity within your Block Watch area, talk with your Block Watch Office for assistance and guidance.

There will always be some neighbours who do not want to be involved for whatever reason. Don't take it personally, leave information about the program should they change their mind and work with those who are interested. Explaining the program is helpful, but pressuring people isn't usually a successful tactic. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes a crime happening to get others involved.

In complexes, don't be disappointed if it's challenging to involve people. Our experience has been that even in a complex of hundreds of units, sometimes only a handful choose to participate. Consider recruiting other residents in your building with promotional material from your local Block Watch Office as well as educating about the program and its benefits at your next AGM meeting.

## FIRST STEPS

- To be organized, set up a separate Block Watch specific shared email account for you and your Co-Captain. Use this for all of your Block Watch related communications.
- Start with a complete list of all addresses/unit numbers that could be involved in your approved area to keep track of those households as you make contact.
- Bring the Block Watch sign-up sheet/participating household list with you and familiarize yourself with the disclaimer (see below).
- Bring promotional Block Watch material with you.
- Have a good understanding of the program so you feel confident to answer questions.

### **Block Watch Society of BC Disclaimer:**

*We the undersigned, wish to participate in the Block Watch program. Permission is hereby given to provide the Block Watch Office with my name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Unlisted phone numbers may be withheld if desired. The Block Watch program does not disseminate, share or distribute this information to anyone and will remove the information at my request.*

*I will communicate with the Captain what information I wish to be shared with both the Block Watch Office and the group. I understand that the Captain/Co-Captain and our local Block Watch Office will manage my personal information in accordance with BC's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) legislation. If I require further clarification, I will contact my local Block Watch Office.*

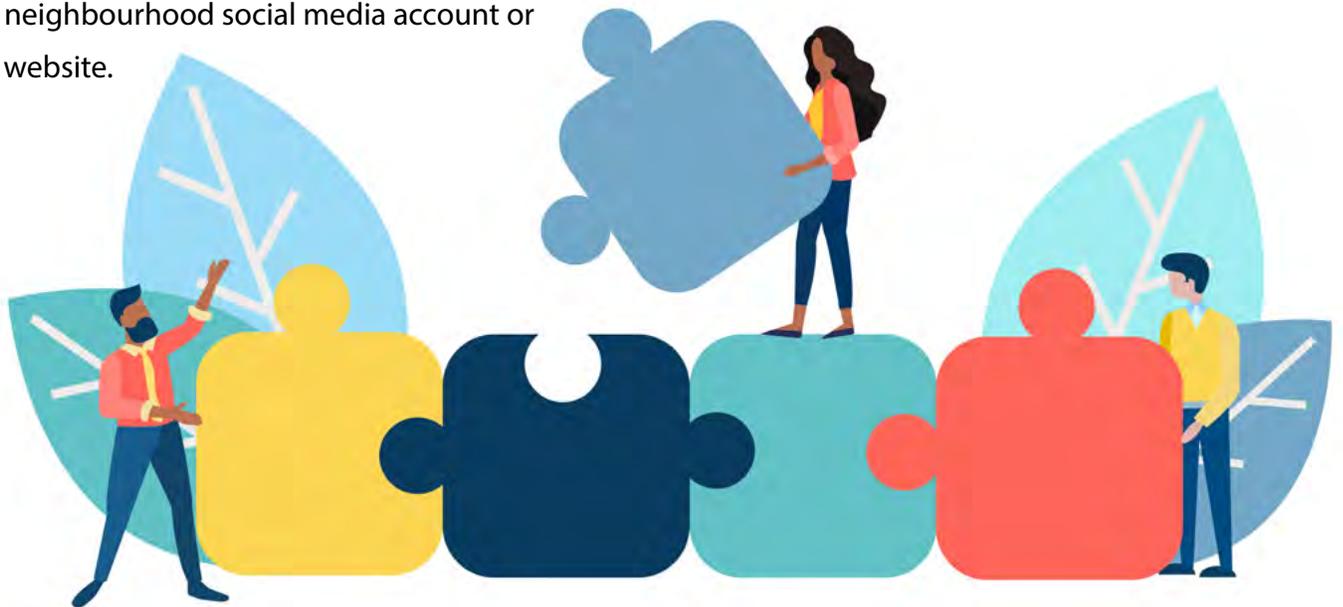
# BUILDING YOUR BLOCK WATCH

## IDEAS TO INVOLVE YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- Door to door.
- Leave Block Watch information in a mailbox or under a door.
- Post Block Watch information in a strata approved location.
- Get strata approval to set up a table in the lobby.
- Casual conversation while out for a walk or in passing.
- If utilized, include Block Watch information in a new neighbour 'welcome' package. This package may contain your strata by-laws.
- Organize a Block Party or other gathering. Ask us for Block Watch promotional material.
- Ask your strata to include an ongoing message in strata minutes.
- Add Block Watch to your complex's or neighbourhood social media account or website.

## TIPS FOR CONTACT

- Keep the conversation light and friendly.
- Explain what has motivated you to start a Block Watch, e.g., crime prevention, helping neighbours connect for safety and friendship. Consider sharing a personal story.
- Assure your neighbours that Block Watch takes minimal time, there are no patrols required and you don't chase criminals. The only commitments are to look out for each other and report criminal and suspicious incidents to police. Their confidentiality and privacy will always be respected.
- Explain that the more neighbours trained in recognizing and reporting suspicious behaviour, the more effective the team will be.
- It is often a needed clarification that Block Watch is **NOT** Block Parent, but is neighbours looking out for each other.



# ACTIVATING YOUR BLOCK WATCH

## 3 STEPS TO COMPLETE ACTIVATION OF YOUR TEAM

To complete the activation of your Block Watch and qualify for your Block Watch street signs you will need to:

1. **Complete** your Block Watch training.
2. **Submit** your Participating Household Map and/or List.
3. **Register** as many of your group as you can for a virtual/online or in-person Participant Training Session.

## BLOCK WATCH MEETING

Your Block Watch team's First Meeting can be held at the Captain or Co-Captain's home or another suitable location. For tips on how to conduct your First Meeting, see pages 20 and 22.

## PARTICIPANT TRAINING SESSIONS

To create an effective Block Watch, it is important that as many participants as possible take the participant training.

- You will be advised of upcoming Participant Training dates.
- Sessions are provided via an online/virtual platform or in-person.
- To register your members for training each Captain/Co-Captain is to email their Block Watch number, participants' names and email address to the Block Watch Office.





# RESIDENTIAL VS COMPLEXES AND BUILDINGS

## RESIDENTIAL

A residential property will generally be a house in either an urban, suburban or rural neighbourhood.

Residential neighbourhoods would ideally use a map and list format. There are really three styles:

- A combined map and/or list where the Block Watch coverage is drawn like a map and the address and contact information for each participant is written into their address box.
- A map of the group coverage and a separate list of your contacts.
- A list only. Please keep addresses in order by street name and hundred block.

With all the mapping features available on the internet today, you can easily get a snip of your street to use. (See pages 18-19 for reference.)

## STRATAS, COOPERATIVES, MOBILE HOME SITES, TOWNHOUSES AND APARTMENTS

In these complexes, Block Watch is organized similar to how residential streets are set up with just a few adjustments.

Each individual strata, complex or tower should select at least one Captain and a Co-Captain. It is difficult for Captains to implement

and promote Block Watch in complexes where they do not live or have access.

If there are single-family residential houses on the same block as the complex, a Captain can include them in their registered group. An Area Leader/Liaison model can also be used where this person connects with each complex's Captain(s), and then acts as the liaison with the Block Watch Office.

An overall map can be useful for incident reporting and emergency preparedness. Mark down the Captain and Co-Captain responsible for different areas and this map can be shared with participants.

It is recommended to use a list format to maintain participating household information in a multi unit complex.

Share the complex map and corresponding list of participating households with the Block Watch Office, but don't share personal information with other residents unless you have expressed permission from each individual.

Be aware that we will only accept a list of your participants who have agreed to be a part of your Block Watch. Do not submit a list of your entire strata or cooperative members. This would be a breach of privacy.



# REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR MAP/LIST

The Block Watch Office has provided you with a startup sheet to start gathering the names and contact information of your neighbours. This startup sheet includes a disclaimer for participants to read or you to explain so they know how their information is used. If you are having trouble understanding or communicating the disclaimer (pg. 12), please feel free to contact your Block Watch Office to assist you further.

The startup Participating Household template can also be used as your ongoing Participating Household List to maintain your Block Watch. You can also create your own personalized list/map.

When you are signing up your neighbours, they may question why you need their contact information and how it will be used beyond the disclaimer. Review page 15 for explanations on how the Block Watch Office uses the information.

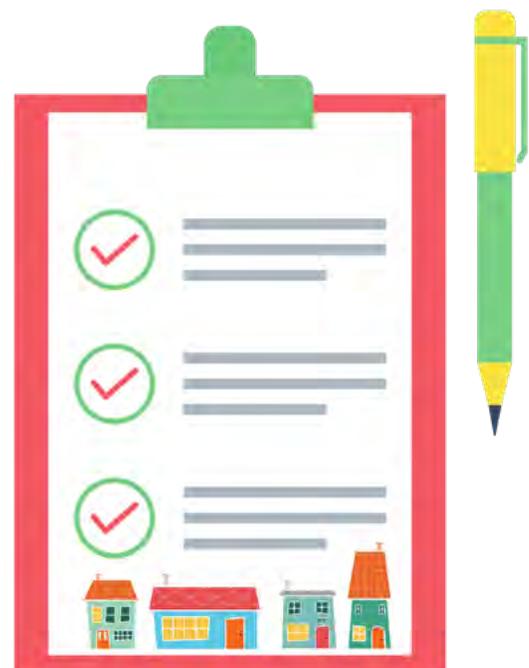
For your team's purposes, the contact information gathered is a communication tool between your group to share timely suspicious or criminal information. For example, if a neighbour saw a moving van in your driveway and knew you were supposed to be away, the list can be used to contact you quickly to determine if the police should be called. You can also use the list to contact a neighbour if you see a suspicious person heading in their direction to ask them to be on the lookout.

The map and contact information obtained is also very useful in emergencies such as fires, floods or earthquakes. Block Captains will be

able to contact and locate individuals and/or provide assistance to those who need help.

Some Captains/Co-Captains have found it helpful to create a separate list that is NOT distributed to their group or the Block Watch Office that contains additional information like family and pet names, vehicle types, colours, license plates and resident occupancy status like, 'not interested in Block Watch,' 'rental,' 'vacant' or 'unable to contact.'

It is important to regularly maintain your Block Watch list of participating households as you become aware of changes. While updating your renewal map and/or list of participating households, consider checking in again with the addresses in your approved area that are not already involved as the occupants or their circumstances may have changed. Contact the Block Watch Office if you wish to change your approved coverage and submit an updated list.



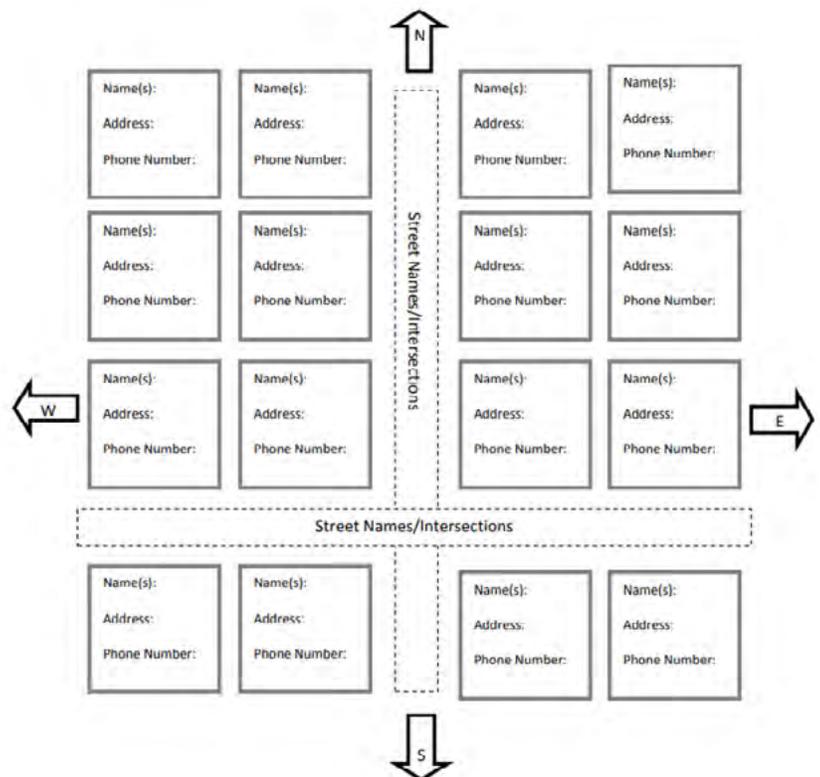
# CREATE YOUR OWN MAP/LIST

You are welcome to create your own Participating Household Map and/or List. If you have difficulties creating your map or list, contact your local Block Watch Office for guidance. We have provided an example of a list and a map on the following page. We have included sample forms in the resources section of your guide for your reference and/or use. Keep your maps and/or lists simple. Make them clear and functional and include the following details:

- Block Watch number.
- Captain(s) & Co-Captain(s) are clearly identified.
- Name of complex (if applicable).
- Indicate total number of participating households. Homes with a separate suite (basement suite) would be considered as 2 separate participating households.
- Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency: 9-1-1
- Non-Emergency Number: ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Date the map and/or list was prepared/updated.
- Indicate north (for Map format only).
- Indicate street names and alleys.
- Include first and last names, residential addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

\*\*\* If you decide to share your map and/or list with your Block Watch group, please ensure you get permission from your participants before distributing. It is mandatory to respect the privacy of participants and follow the PIPA policy noted on [pages 28 and 29](#). \*\*\*

**(Right)**  
Example of a personalized residential styled map and list.



## SAMPLE - MAP WITH SEPARATE LIST



Captain: <u>John Smith</u> Address: <u>2092 First Ave</u> Contact: _____	We the undersigned, wish to participate in the Block Watch program. Permission is hereby given to provide the Block Watch Office with my name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Unlisted phone numbers may be withheld if desired. The Block Watch program does not disseminate, share or distribute this information to anyone and will remove the information at my request.
Co-Captain: <u>Syen Chan</u> Address: <u>1997 Second Crescent</u> Contact: _____	I will communicate with the Captain what information I wish to be shared with both the Block Watch Office and the group. I understand that the Captain/Co-Captain and our local Block Watch Office will manage my personal information in accordance with BC's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) legislation. If I require further clarification, I will contact my local Block Watch Office.
Participating households: <u>9</u>	Block Watch number: <u>AR-25</u>

### LIST OF BLOCK WATCH PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS - WITH PERMISSION

Name	Address	Email	Phone	Permission to Share Info	
1	Not Interested	2080 First Ave			
2	Recently Sold	2008 First Ave			
3	Peter and Jennifer Lee	1978 First Ave	peterandjen@gmail.com	(xxx) xxx-xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx	email and address
4	Wendy and Rob Singh	1964 First Ave	wendy_rob@telus.net	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	email only
5	Bryan Kim	1950 First Ave	bkim@yahoo.ca	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	can share all info with group
6	Steve Kaur	2087 Second Crescent	SteveKaur123@gmail.com	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	email, address and phone
7	Paul Nguyen	2045 Second Crescent	PNguyen1987@rogers.com	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	email only
8	Scott and Kristin Cho	2037 Second Crescent	thechoteam@yahoo.ca	(xxx)xxx-xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx	email and address
9	Not Interested	2044 Second Crescent			
10	Jack and Olivia Adams	1993 Third Ave	Jack_Olivia_Adams@gmail.com	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	can share all info with group
11	Nathan Bell	1957 Third Ave	NBell1956@yahoo.ca	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	name and phone number
12	Chloe Martin	1941 Third Ave	ChloeMartin2223@gmail.com	(xxx)xxx-xxxx	email only



\*\*\* Note: You can make your own list or utilize the lists we have provided in the resources section at the back of this guide. Your Block Watch Office may have a PDF template you can use.

# PREPARING FOR YOUR BLOCK WATCH MEETING



Some Block Watch programs are able to have a program representative attend your meeting and provide the Block Watch information to your neighbours. Other programs provide support and supplies for Captains and Co-Captains to host and lead their own meeting. Following are some tips to help you get started.

- If available, contact your Block Watch representative to attend your first Block Watch meeting.
- Ask the Block Watch Office for an appropriate amount of manuals, handouts and Block Watch door and window decals for distribution.
- Determine a location. Consider someone's home, an amenities room, a coffee shop, or local community facility, such as a school, community centre, library or your local community policing centre. You can also consider hosting

an online/virtual meeting if this is more convenient for those on your team.

- If you plan on holding your meeting virtually, consider preparing a PowerPoint, Keynote or [Canva](#) presentation.
- Explain that you are the Block Captain and have been trained to organize a Block Watch group in your neighbourhood.
- Share the date, time and location of the meeting with your neighbours on your block. Include the end time of the meeting to allow people to plan.
- Review the link to an eight minute Block Watch video series about the program. Consider showing it to your group if you are able. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxK54\\_STJa8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxK54_STJa8)
- The Block Meeting is a good time to gather your group's contact and other information for your block map and/or list. You can also have them review it for accuracy.



# PREPARING FOR YOUR BLOCK WATCH MEETING

- Make arrangements for a group purchase of an engraver or contact your Block Watch Office to see if there is one available to borrow and offer to circulate it amongst your group.
- Consider your preferred communication platform for your group. It could be email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Remember, not everyone has access or is comfortable so you want to choose what is best for your group. Discuss this at your meeting. For members without email or social media access identify a member(s) of your group to share important information with them in a timely manner.
- Don't be disappointed if some neighbours don't show up. This is quite common and doesn't mean that they are not interested. After the meeting, contact those that did not attend and encourage them to participate and collect the missing information for your map and provide them with a Block Watch package.
- After the meeting, distribute the map and/or participant list to your group.
- Submit a copy of your map and/or list to the Block Watch Office. Let them know how the meeting went and ask for any additional supplies you may need.
- CONGRATULATIONS! Once you have held your meeting and submitted your map and/or list to the Block Watch Office, you can ask for your Block Watch street signs if they are available.



# HOLDING A BLOCK WATCH MEETING

## Meeting Guide

Respect your guest's time and prepare and stick to an agenda.

Plan for at least 15 minutes before and/or after for neighbours to get to know each other. Name tags are helpful.

If your meeting is being hosted online, create an invite, and become familiar with online meeting software/platforms. Zoom has become a popular option. You can learn more about Zoom on their website <https://zoom.us>. There are a number of other virtual meeting platforms such as Skype, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Facetime and Google Meet. Choose a platform you are most comfortable with and is easily accessible for everyone.

Food and beverages can be optional and a potluck considered. If possible, have someone welcoming arrivals, gathering contact information for your map

and/or list of participating households and providing any handouts, like the Block Watch manual.

- Introduce yourself as Captains and thank everyone for coming.
- Consider showing the Block Watch Society video via the link on page 20, or located at [www.blockwatch.com](http://www.blockwatch.com)
- If you do not have a Co-Captain, ask if anyone is willing to step up.
- Briefly explain why you have started this Block Watch and ask the group to share concerns they feel Block Watch can help with.
- Refer to the talking points on the next page.
- Decide how often your Block Watch group should meet. Answer questions and deal with any other business at hand.



# HOLDING A BLOCK WATCH MEETING

## Some Talking Points

- Explain why and how the block map is used and emphasize it is stored in a secure location. This could be a safe or locked cabinet.
- Determine a suitable communication platform like, email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.
- Review the 'Golden Rules for Social Media' and guidelines for posting information online.
- Ask team members to regularly check their email or your team's communication platform for updates on incidents of crime/suspicious activity taking place in your neighbourhood. Explain that being informed of crime trends in your area will help you be more effective as a Block watch team. The information that you will be sharing will be received from either the Block Watch Office and/or other members of the group.
- Reinforce the importance of taking the time to report suspicious and criminal incidents. It is also important to stress reporting incidents which may not be considered serious in nature or losses significant. Police can only assign resources and analyze incidents if they are reported. Stress the importance of obtaining a police file number. Explain the process of reporting incidents. (Pg. 25)
- Some insurance companies offer discounts to members of Block Watch. Confirm with your insurer. Choose the insurance policy coverage that's best for you.
- Refer or discuss with your group home security tips. You will find some useful target hardening tips in this guide for your reference.
- Direct your team members to the property documentation form at the back of your guide. (Pg. 54, 55)
- Ensure your home/complex address numbers are lit and visible from the street.
- Encourage your neighbours to add their address number to the alley-side of their residence/complex. Doing this will help emergency responders find you or a suspect faster.



# MAINTAINING YOUR BLOCK WATCH TEAM

To maintain your Block Watch, we request you do the following:

- Forward any information sent to you from your local Block Watch Office to your participating households, in a timely manner.
- For crimes in progress, neighbours can use the contact information to quickly notify a neighbour located in the direction a suspect is heading to keep further watch and call the police if warranted. Ask your members to check their personal surveillance systems which may help solve a crime or identify a suspect.
- Victims / witnesses should report incidents directly to the police first and THEN alert the Block Watch Captain/Co-Captain. If you can provide a police file number, it will assist the police in reviewing the incident/report.
- You can request the Block Watch Office connect you with other Block Captains in your neighbourhood for information sharing purposes.
- Organize an annual meeting and/or Block Party to help your neighbours get to know each other. A connected community is a safer community. Invite a police officer or local community policing centre (CPC) representative, if desired. Ask your Block Watch Office for possible giveaways.
- Welcome new residents in your neighbourhood to your group by explaining the Block Watch program and encourage them to participate in a Block Watch Participant training session.
- Set a good example by initiating and practicing home security and target hardening measures in your own residence.
- Submit an updated Police Information Check as requested by your Block Watch Office, and attend any Captain/Co Captain refresher training sessions. Training and information is constantly changing. It's always good practice to update and refresh your training.



## REPORTING STRUCTURE

Below you will see what steps to follow should you witness or need to report an incident.

### Watch for suspicious activity

See/hear/smell something suspicious or criminal.



### Call the Police (your 1st call!)

**For emergencies and crime in progress, call 9-1-1.**

For all other reports, call your local [Non-Emergency number](#).

Your local police department may also offer online reporting.

Be sure to note your **police file number!**



### Communicate with your Block Captain

Witness/Victim reports the incident to the Captain/Co-Captain and provides them with a summary and police file number.



### Communicate with your team

Captain/Co-Captain with authorization from the Witness/Victim can then alert their team when appropriate.



### Report to your Block Watch Office

Captain/Co-Captain shares the summary of the incident along with the file number to the Block Watch Office for questions and/or guidance.

## PRIVACY ISSUES

When a participant reports an incident, always get their permission on what details they want shared with the rest of the group and/or police and the Block Watch Office. You might ask them to email you the text they are comfortable sharing or send your draft to them for approval.

Consent should always be given prior to sharing photos (i.e., BW photos), contact information including email addresses or anything which may identify a participant. Even providing the location of an incident could provide identifying information. For example, if a neighbour was the victim of a sexual assault, by including the address of where the incident occurred, the identity of the victim could likely be determined.

## GUIDELINES

- Don't engage in gossip. If you discuss your neighbours' non-Block Watch related personal matters with others, they will likely assume you would also share theirs, and trust will be broken.
- Don't approach a neighbour if you see the police at their home. Wait for them to come to you or review your local crime stats.
- When sending group emails, be sure to use the blind carbon copy (BCC) option so that email addresses are not visible to all participants receiving it. This also helps reduce the chance of spam from hacked email accounts.

# PRIVACY ISSUES CONT'D

If forwarding information to your Block Watch Office or team, be sure to delete identifying information such as the email addresses and full names which appear in the email header, or in your participant's signature block.

See the following example:



## INCORRECT WAY

*Hi Block Watch Office,*

*Please see the information of one of our participants below.*

*Thanks*

*Tim Doe*

*Block Watch Captain AB-14*

*From: Jane Smith <[jsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:jsmith@hotmail.com)>*

*Date: 30 November, 12:48:53 PM PST*

*Subject: AB-14 Attempted Break in Sunday 6am Nov 29th*

*To: Tim Doe <[mail@Tdoe.com](mailto:mail@Tdoe.com)>*

*Subject: Re: Attempted Break-in Sunday  
6am Nov 29th - Police File #: 21-12345*

*Hello Tim,*

*I am forwarding this email to inform you of suspicious activity in our neighbourhood. Please see the attached video. Feel free to share it with the Block Watch Office.*

*Thank you,*

*Jane Smith, 1234 Broadway Lane*

## CORRECT WAY

*Hi Block Watch Office,*

*Please see the information of one of our participants below.*

*Thanks,*

*Tim Doe*

*Block Watch Captain AB-14*

*From: Jane*

*Date: 30 November, 12:48:53 PM PST*

*Subject: AB-14 Attempted Break in Sunday 6am Nov 29th*

*To: Tim Doe <[mail@Tdoe.com](mailto:mail@Tdoe.com)>*

*Subject: Re: Attempted Break-in Sunday  
6am Nov 29 - Police File #: 21-12345*

*Hello Tim,*

*I am forwarding this email to inform you of suspicious activity in our neighbourhood. Please see the attached video. Feel free to share it with the Block Watch Office.*

*Thank you,*

*Jane*

# GOLDEN RULES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

The purpose of your Block Watch group is to share information about crime and suspicious activity within the boundary of your Block Watch group. If you create a Block Watch chat or social media group, the following are some recommended guidelines. As the administrator of the group, you can post some of these guidelines for members to follow.

1. Call 9-1-1 for any emergency, in progress crime or suspicious incident before posting. If you are unsure or it's after the fact, call your local Non-Emergency number at \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Comments will be removed if they are RUDE, RACIST, or THREATENING. Members will be warned once, and should they continue they will be removed from the group.
3. Block Watch DOES NOT recommend you share any photos or video of suspects on any online platform. Do NOT post pictures of anyone who appears to be a minor or youth, regardless of the circumstances. Be aware when posting images and video online, you are personally liable for defamation suits which may arise as a result of your posts. You may also compromise an investigation. If you have photo or video evidence of a crime, please report it to your local police department for further investigation.
4. Never advocate violence AGAINST ALLEGED CRIMINALS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR BY IMPLICATION. Vigilantism is counter-productive and in most cases,

illegal. If you see a suspect you recognize from a post, covertly and safely call the police without alerting the suspect.

5. Do NOT post off-topic, including memes, rants, business or people bashing, or gossip.
6. Do NOT post names OR OTHER PERSONAL INFORMATION. Many in this group are strangers that just happen to live near you. Anything you post could be screen-captured and shared with outsiders.
7. When posting an alert FOR A SUSPICIOUS EVENT, be sure to include the date/time and both cross-streets in the description.
8. Only post first hand or confirmed information. Information which is hearsay, or second or third hand, can be unreliable and cause undue concern.
9. NO advertising OF ANY KIND.

**Admin support:** If you have any concerns about a comment or post, please message the social media site's admin, or use the 'report to admin' option on the post. Issues can often be resolved sooner and with local understanding. The Block Watch Office can sometimes be of assistance.



# BLOCK WATCH SOCIETY OF BC PRIVACY POLICY

BC's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) sets out the ground rules for how private sector and not-for-profit organizations may collect, use or disclose information about its members, clients and participants (stakeholders). It strikes a balance between the rights of stakeholders to control access to and use of their personal information, with the Society's need to collect and use stakeholders' personal information for legitimate and reasonable purposes.

PIPA gives stakeholders the right to see, and ask for the corrections to personal information the Society may have about its Stakeholders. If an individual believes the Society is not living up to its responsibilities under the law, they have the right to take the matter to the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC.

Personal information means information about an identifiable individual, including:

- Name, age, weight, height.
- Home address and phone number.
- Race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation.
- Marital status and religion.
- Education.
- Employment information.

Personal information doesn't include the name, job title, business address, telephone number or other contact information of an individual at a place of business.

## How does PIPA protect my personal information?

The ability to control their personal information is key to their right to privacy. PIPA gives individuals control over their personal information by requiring the Society to obtain consent to collect, use or disclose personal information. (There are some limited exceptions to the consent requirement).

## PIPA gives individuals the right to:

- Know why the Society and affiliated programs collect, uses or discloses personal information.
- Expect the Society and affiliated programs to collect, use or disclose personal information reasonably and appropriately.
- Know who in the Society and affiliated programs are responsible for protecting personal information.
- Expect the Society and affiliated programs to protect personal information by taking appropriate security measures.
- Expect the personal information the Society and affiliated programs uses or discloses to be accurate and complete.
- Request access to their personal information and ask for corrections.
- Complain about how the Society and affiliated programs handles their personal information.

# BLOCK WATCH SOCIETY OF BC PRIVACY POLICY

## PIPA requires the Society and affiliated programs to:

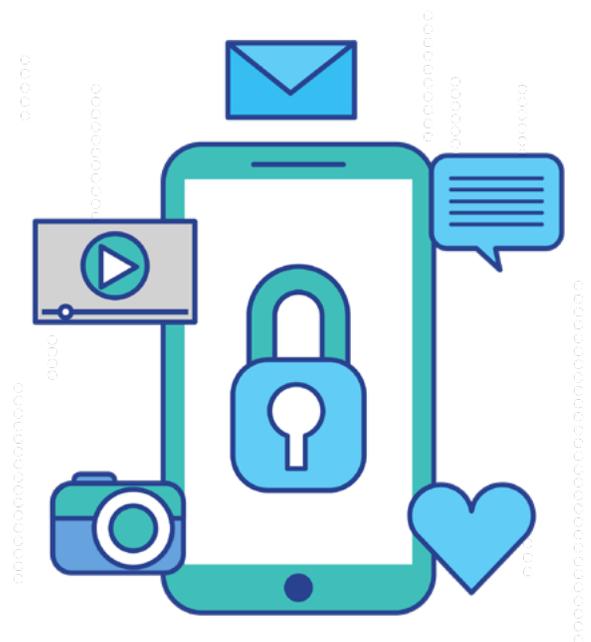
- Obtain an individual's consent when personal information is collected, used or disclosed (except in limited circumstances).
- Collect personal information by fair and lawful means.
- Advise individuals how their personal information is being used and to whom it has been disclosed.
- Have personal information policies that are clear, understandable and readily available.
- Destroy, erase or make anonymous personal information that it no longer needs for the purpose for which it was collected or for a related business or legal reason.

## Under PIPA, the Society and affiliated programs may not:

- Refuse to supply an individual with a product or a service because they don't consent to the collection, use or disclosure of their personal information for the purposes that are not necessary for the transaction.
- Use or disclose an individual's personal information for any purpose other than to which they have consented (except in circumstances where no consent is required).

## What if an individual believes their privacy rights are being violated?

Contact the Society via email and your concern will be responded to by the Society's Privacy Director. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved it can then be escalated to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of BC for review.



NOTES



# CRIME PREVENTION TRAINING

Suspicious Activity

Situational Awareness

Body Language

Common Characteristics of a Thief

How to be a Good Witness

When to call 9-1-1 vs Non-Emergency

What to Expect When Reporting to Police

Questions Asked by a Call-Taker

Target Hardening





# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Block Watch does not ask you to do patrols of your complex or neighbourhood. However, you can increase your personal and neighbourhood safety by regularly practicing situational awareness.

## What is situational awareness?

Situational awareness is the ability to identify, process and understand what's happening around you. At the same time, you are thinking ahead to protect your own safety and recognize suspicious behaviour.

## Awareness Levels

It is suggested to try to be in a state of **relaxed**

### TUNED OUT

UNAWARE OF SURROUNDINGS

### RELAXED AWARENESS

PAYING ATTENTION BUT ENJOYING LIFE

### FOCUSED AWARENESS

CAREFULLY OBSERVING A POTENTIAL DANGER

### HIGH ALERT

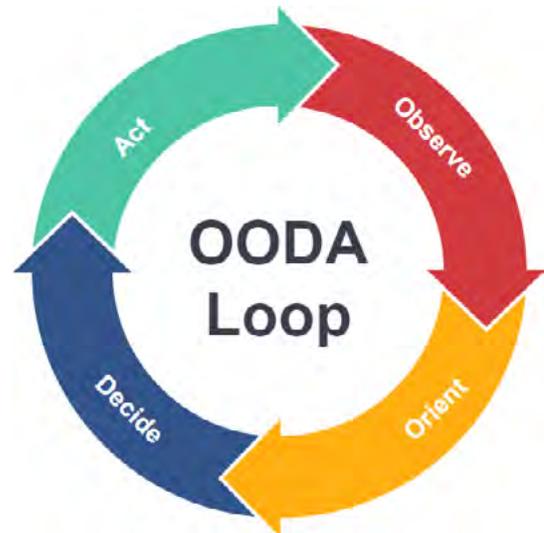
CONFIRMED THREAT, NEED TO TAKE ACTION

### COMATOSE

IN SHOCK, UNABLE TO FUNCTION

**awareness.** This means not being constantly stressed about what's happening around you but just being aware of your surroundings while enjoying life.

The OODA Loop is a decision-making process for dealing with violent confrontations created by [Colonel John Boyd](#). This loop can also be applied to self-defense and applied in your daily lives when dealing with situations. There are four steps in the loop: **Observe**, **Orient**, **Decide** and then **Act**.



We will mainly focus on **observing** and **orienting**. **Orient** is about positioning yourself in your environment while making observations which will provide you with the necessary information to make a decision on how to act or not act. For example, you observe suspicious activity, you orient yourself to continue making observations from a safe place and make the decision to call 9-1-1. Situational awareness is a combination of **Observation** and **Orientation**.

# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS CONT'D

An important consideration in orienting and being aware, is to stay off your cell phone until you know you are in a safe place or confident in your surroundings. It is difficult to be situationally aware when your attention is focused elsewhere.

Expanding our peripheral vision can also help detect movement which is out of the norm. To practice, try getting in the habit of scanning everything in front of you without moving your head, just move your eyes. As an exercise, try describing an object or person in your peripheral vision without having to turn your head.

Practicing your awareness and observation skills is vital, as no two situations are the same and

every environment provides unique conditions that will challenge your adaptability. When you practice situational awareness, you are more likely to stay calm, **orient** yourself, make **decisions** and take appropriate **action** where others may pause, freeze or panic (**COMATOSE LEVEL**).

You can try practicing your situational awareness in your everyday life when:

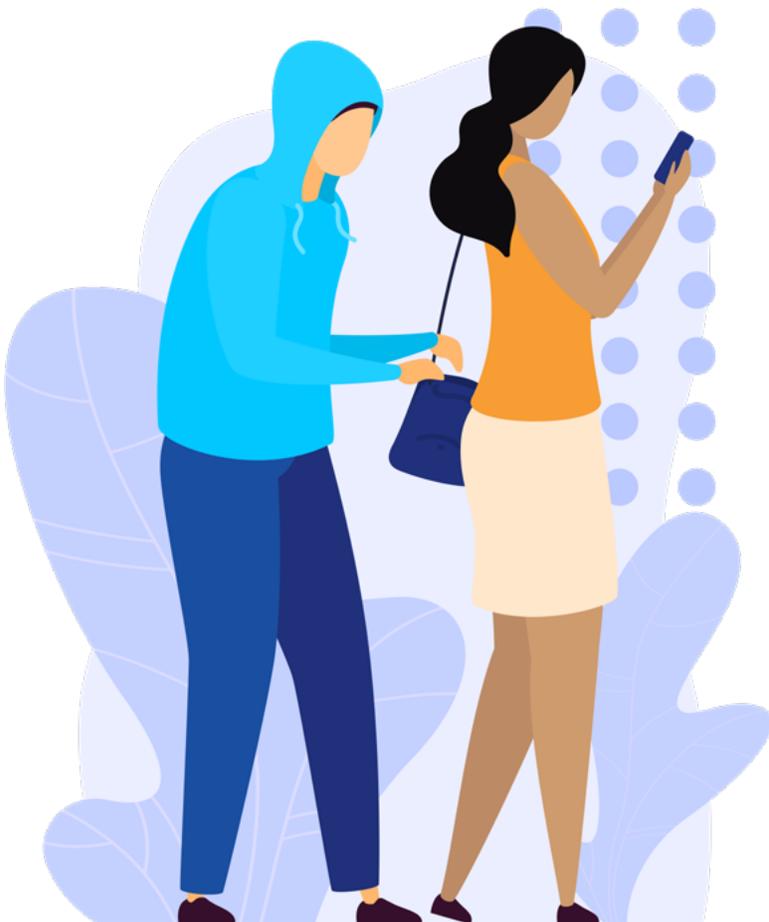
- Walking to and from your vehicle.
- Walking through a parking lot.
- Driving or walking into and out of your neighbourhood, parking lot or underground.
- Walking your dog.
- Looking out a window of your residence and recognizing what may be out of place in your neighbourhood.

Some fun exercises to test your observation skills can be found by clicking the video links below:

Challenge 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYEAQG62pYA>

Challenge 2: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viqK\\_yNaog](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viqK_yNaog)

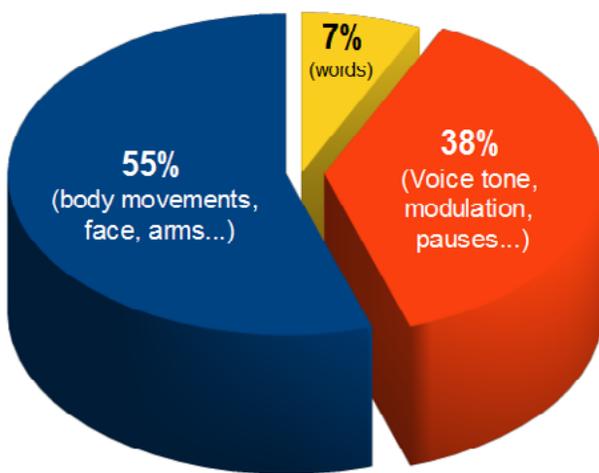
Challenge 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eblf60WyUzk>



# BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is the process of communicating non-verbally through conscious or unconscious gestures and movements.

Body language reflects our physiology, our mental state, our thoughts and emotions, which are fluid and reflexive and subject to both internal and external factors.



Non-verbal communication such as our body movements and expressions make up approximately 55% of the way in which we communicate with each other.

Being situationally aware and understanding body language can assist you in differentiating between suspicious behaviour and what would be considered 'normal' behaviour. Being able to distinguish between the two will assist you in recognizing whether or not someone may be in **'crime mode.'**

It is also important to note that someone's body language and what it represents may be different depending on their cultural background. Hand gestures and yelling can mean different things to people from different cultures/countries.

If you are curious about the different ways body language is portrayed, you can read up on some of the differences here <https://virtualspeech.com/blog/cultural-differences-in-body-language>



Look at the above two images.

What does their body language tell you and how do they differ?

# COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF A THIEF

Always be conscious not to let preconceived notions, biases or discriminatory practices enter your mind when trying to assess if someone's behaviour is suspicious or not. Remember, it's never about what that person looks like, but whether their actions are suspicious or unexplainable, e.g., Why are they peering over neighbourhood fences?

As a Block Watch Captain/Co-Captain or participant, you will want to consider what common characteristics a property crime offender has and the behaviours to look out for. Some examples of property crime would be Break and Enters, Theft from or Theft of Auto, Mischief, and various other Thefts (Theft of mail).



So what does a property crime offender look like and how can you spot one? The most common characteristics and behaviours of property crime thieves can include:

- Hovering, wandering, loitering, lingering, hiding, meandering, drifting and pacing. Someone who is about to commit a crime will generally survey an area before selecting their target. They will walk back and forth, look into yards of residences and determine what doors and windows are accessible and obscured from view. They may ring the door bell to see if anyone is home or sit on the front porch.
- Hyper-vigilant body language, such as shoulder checking often occurs before a crime is committed by the offender to see if they are being watched.
- Some property crime offenders will appear nervous or edgy.
- Walking or bicycling: the offender will want a quick means of exit.
- May imitate someone who collects recyclables, in an effort to not appear suspicious.
- Mini-disguise: baseball cap, bike helmet, sunglasses, hoody. Anything to hide their face or distinguishable features.
- Layered clothing for warmth or easy removal. They will sometimes strip their jacket or piece of clothing to change their appearance after committing a crime.



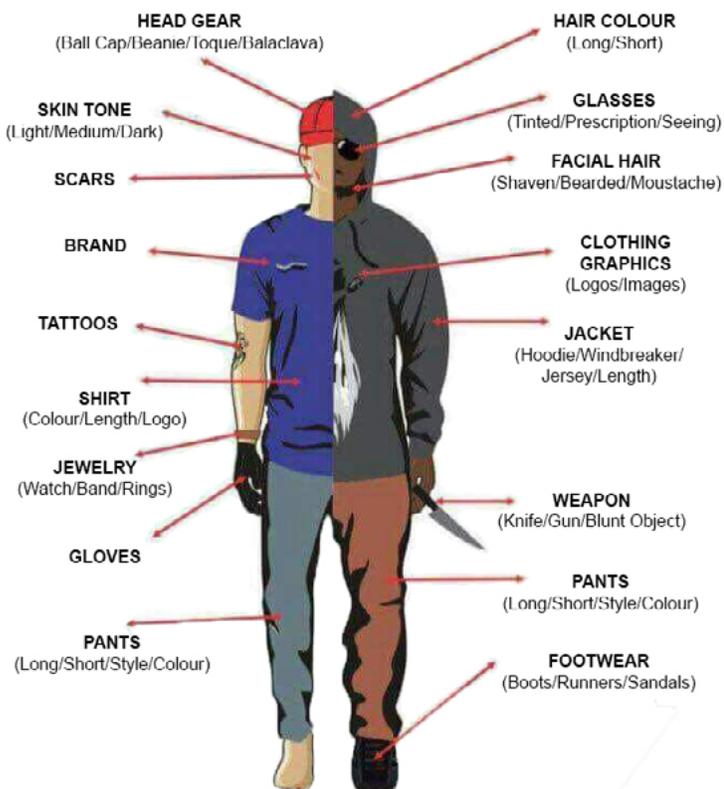
# HOW TO BE A GOOD WITNESS – SUSPECT ID

“A picture is worth a 1000 words.”

Video surveillance has become a valuable tool in helping police solve crime, identify suspects or deter crime from happening. In the absence of available video, a witness's observations will be the best evidence. This is why your role and skill as a Block Watch volunteer are vital. Being able to accurately describe an event and provide descriptions are extremely valuable in police investigations.

## Suspect Identification

Being able to describe people is a valuable skill which takes practice. When you see something suspicious, *watch a little longer* and start gathering information.



(You can find a larger version of this image in your resources section)

It is these **observations** which will be important when the call-taker determines what resources are needed for a call in-progress.

- Observe the suspicious person. What are their actions? What is their body language telling you?
- What are they wearing? Are there logos on their clothing or a hat you recognize?
- Look at the shoes. A thief may wear extra layers of clothing which they may throw away to change their appearance but they rarely change their shoes. What is the brand? What type of shoe? Colour?
- Note anything distinct about the suspect? i.e., piercings, scars, tattoos or the way they walk?

When making your observations, it's always good practice to start your descriptions from the head down to the feet.



# HOW TO BE A GOOD WITNESS – VEHICLES

## Vehicle Descriptors

A suspect may also be connected to a vehicle which they use to commit crime. If you observe a suspect get into a vehicle, what sort of details should you be paying attention to? Below you will find some important descriptors.

Beautiful British Columbia <b>PLATE #</b> _ _ _ _	Beautiful British Columbia <b>MAKE</b> _ _ _ _
Beautiful British Columbia <b>COLOUR</b> _ _ _ _	Beautiful British Columbia <b>MODEL</b> _ _ _ _
Beautiful British Columbia <b>LOCATION</b> _ _ _ _	Beautiful British Columbia <b>DIRECTION OF TRAVEL</b> _ _ _ _

## MEMORY ACTIVITY

Games are a fun way to improve your memory skills. You can play memory games while walking through your neighbourhood or during your commute. When you walk past or drive by a vehicle, as you reach the end of the block try and recall the license plate.

You can also play a memory game with your kids by looking at a picture of a car for 10 seconds, flipping it over and writing down what you can remember. Whomever gets the most descriptors correct, wins the round! [Kim's Game](#) is another fun activity to practice your memory skills.

A useful tip to remember a license plate is to break it up into distinct assemblages, preferably ones you can associate with something else. Any meaningful connection you can make will help such as a date of birth or words you can make from the letters.





# HOW TO BE A GOOD WITNESS – EVIDENCE

## What to do with evidence before police arrive

You have witnessed a crime, walked into a crime scene or unfortunately are a victim of a crime. What do you do with possible evidence left behind? After you have reported the incident and are waiting for police to arrive, these are the following guidelines:

- DON'T TOUCH anything in the crime scene or anything which may have been left behind, touched or tampered with by the suspect.
- If someone breaks into your home using a pry bar don't touch the door. If possible, ensure others living at your residence enter and exit through a different door.
- DON'T TOUCH any tools the suspect may have used to break into your home.
- DON'T TOUCH any items of food the suspect may have eaten or left behind. This same rule applies to cigarettes, bottles, beverage cups, etc.
- PRESERVE any possible footprints at the scene.
- DON'T clean up the scene. When making your report, advise the call-taker there is evidence at your home. If you notice any blood on the windows or broken glass, be sure to point this out to the attending Officer.
- PRESERVE video surveillance. As soon as possible, inquire with your neighbours about video surveillance they may have. Quality video can assist police, whether that be identifying suspects involved in a crime and/or supporting criminal charges.



# WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1 VS NON-EMERGENCY

When you observe suspicious behaviour it is important to call the police as soon as you can and ideally from a safe and covert position while the incident is happening.

So what types of calls would you call 9-1-1 for versus calling non-emergency?

## Call 9-1-1



Some people are hesitant to call 9-1-1, but when you believe someone is in danger it is appropriate!

Call 9-1-1 if:

- Someone is being attacked.
- You hear gunshots.
- Someone is acting aggressively.
- You fear someone will get hurt.

You believe a crime is happening or is about to happen. Some examples include:

- Someone is peering into homes or someone is breaking a car window.
- Someone is checking door handles.
- A crime appears to have just been committed and a suspect is leaving the scene.

You believe something suspicious is happening right now.

- Someone knocks on your front door and when you don't respond, you hear a knock on your back door.
- Someone is standing around the parking gate to your complex for no apparent reason and you are worried they might be trying to get into the parkade intent on breaking into cars or storage lockers.

If you have called 9-1-1, stay on the phone and **do not hang up.**

## When to call the Non-Emergency Line

( )

Call the Non-Emergency line when the crime has already happened and immediate police attendance will not affect the outcome. For example:

- You saw a drug deal but the suspects are no longer there.
- You come home from work and notice your home was broken into. The suspects have left and there is no danger.
- There is graffiti on your fence.

**Add your local non-emergency line to your mobile device.** It's the most commonly used number in making police reports. You can look up your local number at the E-COMM website: <https://www.ecomm911.ca/non-emergency-calls/find-your-local-non-emergency-numbers/>

# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN REPORTING TO POLICE

## What to do and what to expect when reporting suspicious behaviour/activity.



Police are dispatched on a priority basis as a result of your observations. As much as the police would like to be in all places at all times, this isn't possible and delays may occur. Therefore, the timeliness and detail of what you witness and report is important and affects police response priority and the investigation.

1. Try not to alert the suspect that you are on to them and/or that you are contacting the police unless your safety or someone else's is at immediate risk. A suspect who believes they have been discovered will quickly flee the area, reducing the chances of police locating them.
2. Safely and discreetly get the person's physical and clothing description. Refer to the descriptors diagram on page 38 or in the resources section. Keep the suspect in view as long as possible. **ENSURE YOUR SAFETY AT ALL TIMES.** Do NOT engage the suspect or put yourself in harm's way. For vehicles, get as many details as you can.
3. Call 9-1-1. If possible, keep the suspect in view as you speak with the call-taker. If it's safe to do so, try not to break visual continuity of the suspect. Consider having someone bring you a phone to call police. If it's a non-emergency report, please call your Non-Emergency Line ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) with your details and a written statement if you have one prepared.
4. If you have called 9-1-1, stay on the phone and **do not hang up.** If you hang up, the call-taker will call you back. If you can't be reached, police will be dispatched to the call.
5. State the nature of your call.
6. The call-taker will lead you through a series of questions.
7. After reporting the incident to police and obtaining your police file number, send an email to your Block Captain or Co-Captain. With your permission, they can share details with your team.
8. As soon as possible, the Block Captain/ Co-Captain fans out the incident details to the team on their chosen communication platform and copies the Block Watch Office. Include the Block Watch number and the police file number in your email.

# QUESTIONS ASKED BY A CALL-TAKER

When a 9-1-1 call-taker answers your call, they will ask you “do you need police, fire or ambulance?” The call-taker will also confirm for which municipality.

Your call will then be immediately transferred.

Stay on the line and follow instructions.

The call-taker will ask you a number of questions. Listen carefully, and when providing details, speak clearly and try to remain calm.

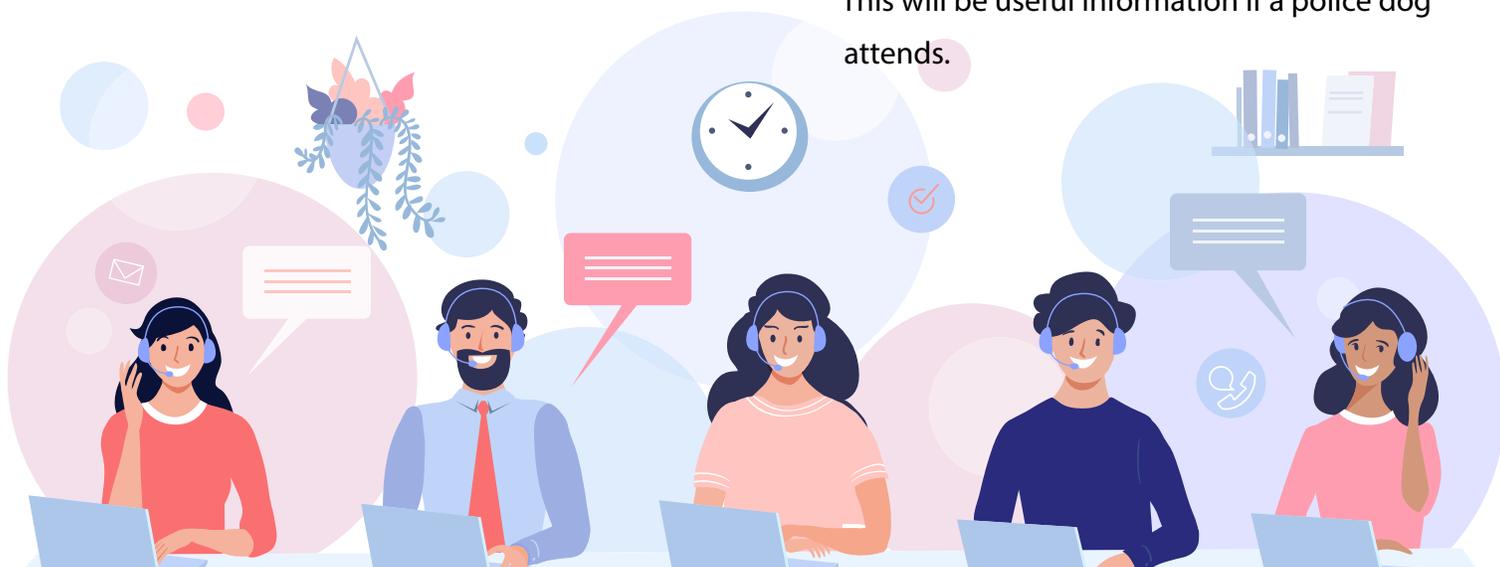
Call-takers are trained to ask specific questions in a priority sequence. Answer their questions the best you can.

Depending on the nature of your call, while you are providing details to the call-taker, the information you are giving will be simultaneously relayed to police and/or emergency responders en-route to the incident.

## Questions the call-taker will ask.

Examples of questions a call-taker will ask include:

- What is your full name, date of birth and address?
- What’s happening?
- Where is it happening?
- Where are you?
- What does the person/s look like? (Suspect description.)
- Is there a vehicle involved? What does it look like? What direction is it facing? Can you see the license plate?
- Can you see any weapons, or something which can be used as a weapon?
- What is the time delay? (If the suspect has left your view or the scene.)
- Where was the last place you saw the suspect? This will be useful information if a police dog attends.



# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Properties become targets of crime for a variety of reasons. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED (pronounced sep-ted) is a concept now accepted and used widely as an effective way to improve safety in neighbourhoods and communities.

Components or strategies of CPTED include **Natural Surveillance**, **Territorial Reinforcement**, **Natural Access Control** and **Target Hardening** and can be applied to both residential and commercial neighbourhoods.

## Natural Surveillance

This design concept assists in discouraging criminal activity by ensuring public spaces are clearly observable. Examples of natural surveillance are ensuring well-lit doorways, windows should provide visibility of the property and the street, properly maintained landscaping which does not impede the ability to see the street, lighting of lane ways, common areas of buildings as well as at access points to a house or building.

## Territorial Reinforcement

This design concept defines a property, clearly identifying areas which are considered private from public spaces. Ways of doing this include the use of landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments and fencing which create boundaries without compromising natural surveillance.

## Natural Access Control

This design concept is focused on preventing crime by discouraging access to crime targets

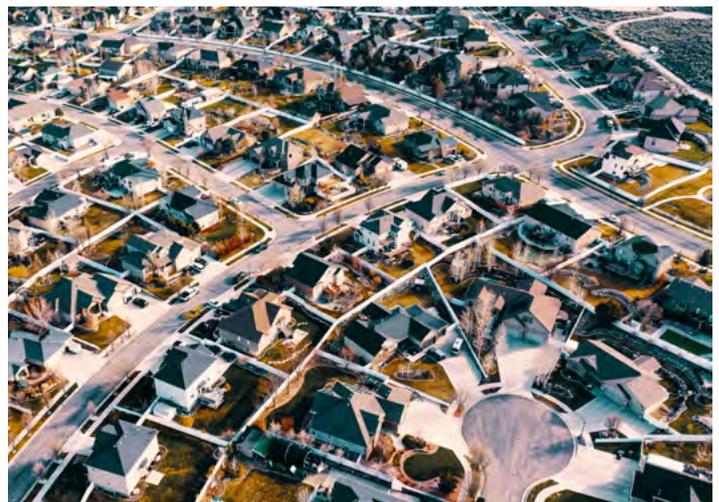
and creates a perception of risk to property crime offenders. Natural access is an extension of territorial reinforcement by ensuring streets, sidewalks, building entrances and neighbourhood gateways clearly indicate public routes, and discourages access to private areas.

## Target Hardening

Target Hardening is accomplished with physical security measures such as applying door and window security, lighting and installing video surveillance.

Generally, if opportunity or the means to commit a crime are removed as a result of applying CPTED techniques, then the chances of crime being committed are reduced. The best opportunities for safety, however, come with the establishment of connected communities, which is what the Block Watch program is all about.

In this guide, we will cover a number of different CPTED strategies including theft from vehicle prevention techniques, target hardening techniques such as door and window locks as well as some guidelines with respect to locksmiths.



# CPTED: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES

The diagram below illustrates a number of CPTED strategies you can implement around a single family residence.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Don't post pictures on social media while away on vacation, or photos of high end items, such as the new road bike you just invested in, or that 65" tv screen. You are advertising when you are away, or what property you possess inside.

## MAIL DELIVERY

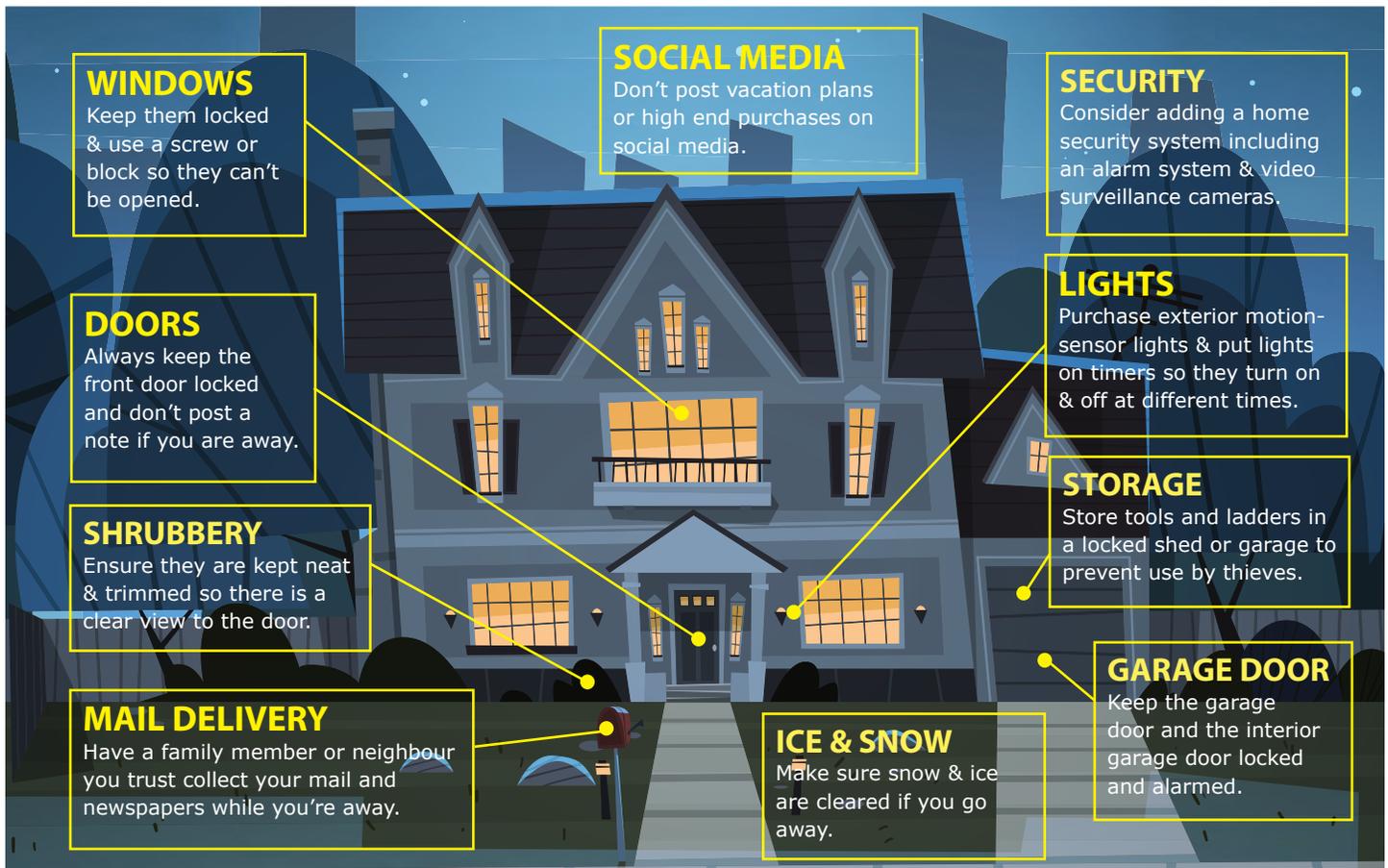
We suggest you have a mail box which is secured. If you are unable to lock your mailbox, consider obtaining a PO Box for important mail which might

contain personal information or for your most recent amazon purchase. Property thieves are known to follow delivery trucks, and then steal your package once the delivery has been made.

## GARAGE DOOR

Ensure your garage door is locked as well as the interior door located inside your garage. Do NOT keep your keys stored in the garage or leave your garage door opener inside your vehicle. This is especially true if you park your vehicle on the street.

Refer to the Target Hardening section of tips on door and window security, and ensure you keep your shrubs trimmed around your windows.



This is a link to a short video produced by the Saskatchewan RCMP, as an introduction to some steps you can take to target harden your residence. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN3C3iERIOM>

# CPTED: APARTMENTS/CONDOS

The CPTED techniques outlined on the previous page/illustration can also be applied to multi-unit dwellings such as apartments/condominiums. There are a few added considerations which differ from single family residences.

Wherever feasible, ground-level units and the residents should be able to observe outdoor areas and the street (natural surveillance), and building entrances and exterior doors should be clearly visible from the street or by neighbours.

Landscape plantings should define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces around the property (territorial reinforcement) while at the same time not compromising line of sight.

Access points to the building, parking areas and pedestrian walkways should be well-lit. Visitor parking should be clearly marked.

Consider installing video surveillance at your entry/exit doors, your mail room/area, elevators, storage rooms and your underground parking access points.

## WAIT FOR THE GATE

Encourage residents when entering the underground parking garage to wait for the parking gate to close before proceeding further into the

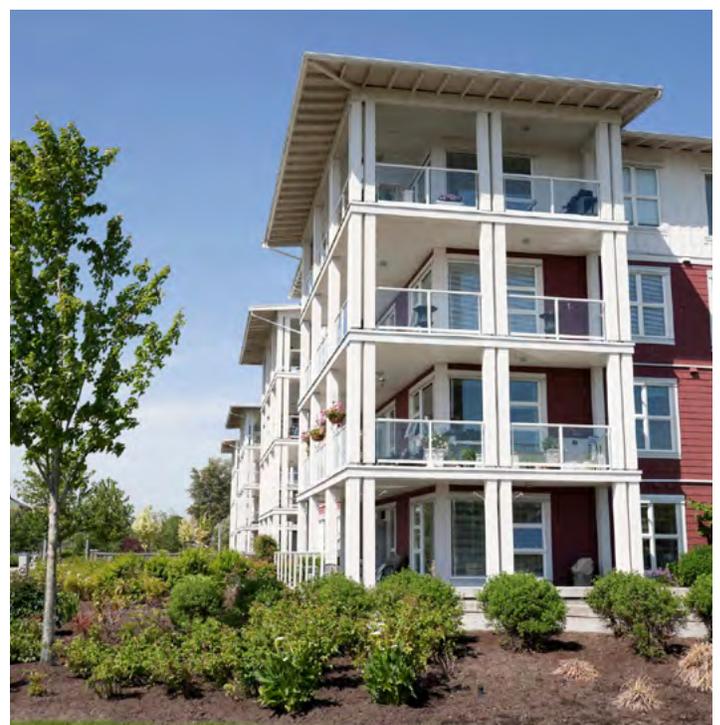


garage. Property crime offenders are known to gain access to a building by following vehicles entering the building via the parking gate.

## NO KEY NO ENTRY

Do not let people follow you into the building unless you know they are a resident. If a person is standing outside the building when you approach, or tries to follow you inside when entering the front door, apologize and tell them they will have to buzz in. Property crime offenders are known for following residents into the building to access the mail room and storage locker areas. They may pose as delivery drivers to gain access. Contact your local Block Watch Office to see if your building can obtain 'No Key No Entry' decals which can be placed at your building's entry/exit points for reference during these interactions. You can watch a video about the decals on the Block Watch YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5m01zhOK9Do>



# CPTED: BROKEN WINDOW THEORY & AUTO CRIME

## BROKEN WINDOW THEORY



The 'Broken Window Theory' states that visible signs of disorder and misbehaviour in an environment encourages further disorder and misbehaviour, leading to serious crimes.

The theory dating back to 1982, states *"No matter how rich or poor a neighbourhood, one broken window would soon lead to many more windows being broken"* and signals that the people who reside there don't care about the property. If a home or complex looks uncared for, it can attract crime and disorder.

If you have graffiti on your building and don't have it cleaned up, it will invite more. Or, if your neighbours continue to leave abandoned mattresses or furniture outside in the lane, this will attract more abandoned items. Try and keep your property clean and looking cared for. Landscaping and general upkeep as well as applying CPTED techniques will help deter criminal activity in your neighbourhood.

## CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR VEHICLES

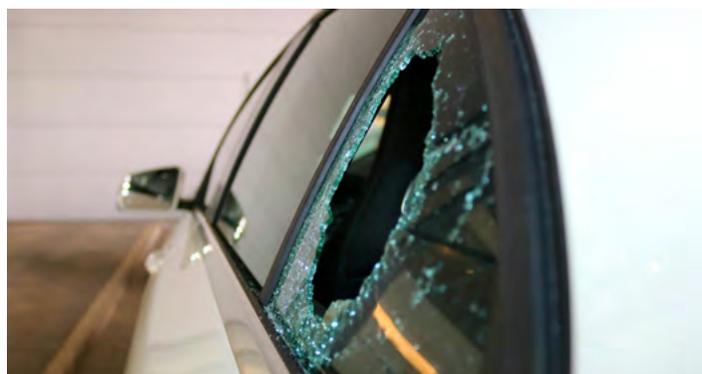
It is recommended that you lock your vehicle and park in well-lit and traveled areas. Testing vehicle door handles is the most common

method a thief will use to steal anything from your vehicle, including loose change, GPS devices, dash cams, device cables, insurance documents, sunglasses, mail, etc. These items are usually sold for drugs or identity theft purposes.

If you have to leave items in your vehicle, place them out of sight or in your trunk. If a thief can see anything of value, no matter how insignificant to you, it can become a motivation to break in. A broken window or lock can be a costly deductible and repeat incidents can cause insurance rates to increase. You can do your part to reduce potential losses by not leaving anything in your vehicle, even for short periods of time. You never know who is watching.

Older vehicles are easier targets as they tend to have weaker door locks and fewer modern security measures such as electronic engine immobilizers. If your vehicle was manufactured prior to 2007, you may want to use a steering-wheel lock or other anti-theft device to better secure your vehicle.

Any vehicle can be stolen with the keys. Never leave your keys unguarded, such as at the gym or at the office.



# TARGET HARDENING: VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

## AUTO CRIME PREVENTION TOOLS

You can request theft from auto crime prevention window decals or mirror hangers from the Block Watch Office. These work as reminders to remove your valuables when you leave your vehicle unattended and tells the thieves there is nothing to steal inside. Check out this video for tips on how you can use the decals. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTzn4gBtltQ>

For auto crime prevention tips: <https://www.icbc.com/road-safety/prevent-autocrime/Pages/default.aspx>



## VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

A home security system can be an excellent investment in target hardening your residence and/or complex. It may act as a deterrent and can help the police identify suspect/s should a crime occur.

Video surveillance which clearly shows a suspect's face is ideal. However, all video can be very valuable in investigating and solving a crime. Some surveillance systems will allow you to

monitor your home from the convenience of your communications device while you are away.

If you reside in a building or strata complex and want to install video surveillance, speak with your strata corporation/management company for further guidance. If video surveillance is installed, your complex must abide by the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) legislation, and is to only be used for security purposes.

For further information on guidelines from PIPA about the use of video surveillance, click on the following link. <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/guidance-documents/1453>

Basic video surveillance recommendations:

- Motion and light sensor activated.
- Infrared capability.
- High definition (HD).
- Placed in a well thought-out location which is most likely to capture a suspect's face, and at the same time is in a secure location and protected against tampering.
- Use caution not to capture private areas of a neighbour's home which is invasive and could cause conflict.



# TARGET HARDENING: DOOR SECURITY

## Creating a Thief Resistant Door



For some more door locking tips from the Vancouver Police Department, click on the link:

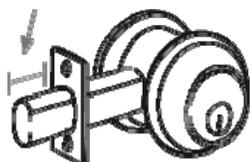
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsRARYJZ4Hs>

Thieves may pass over a difficult point of entry for an easier target. Make it difficult! Use a metal or solid wood door. Your front and back doors should be illuminated between dusk and dawn. Leave the light on, set a timer, or use a motion sensor.

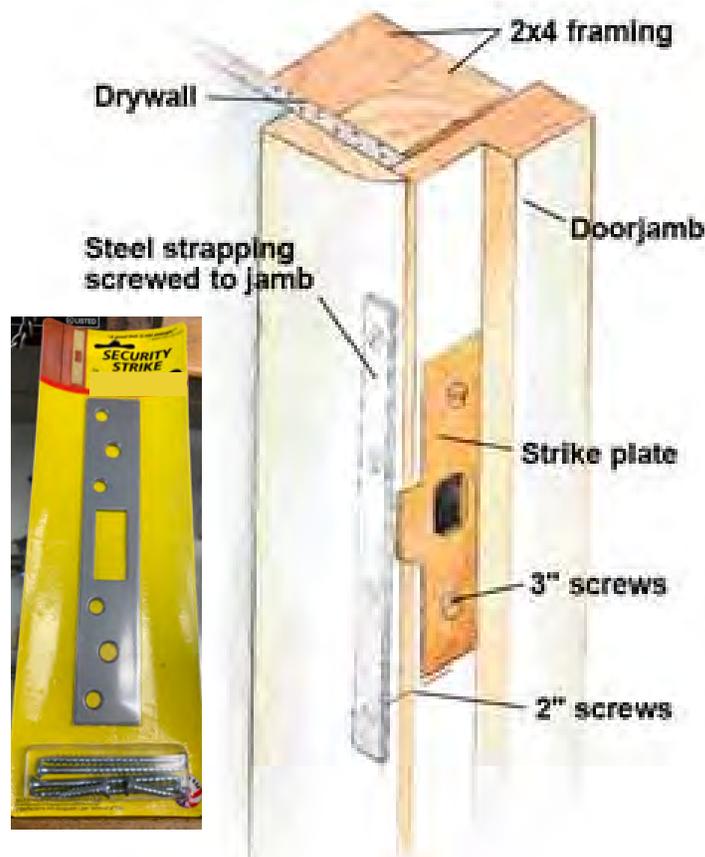
Don't count on alarm decals to keep you safe.

### Ask Your Locksmith for:

- Peep hole viewer.
- Interlocking plates.
- Grade 2 or better deadbolt with a 1" throw.
- Heavy duty strike plate with 3" wood screws.



## Heavy Duty Strike Plates



To prevent a forcible entry, a wooden door frame must be strengthened with a metal heavy duty strike plate. Wooden door frames splinter easily. Be sure the strike plate is installed with 3" wood screws to prevent being kicked, pried or shouldered in.

For **storage lockers**, make sure you use a strong padlock, one which is hard to twist and cut. Speak with a locksmith for recommendations.



# TARGET HARDENING: WINDOWS/SLIDING DOORS

## Window Security



Doors and windows are the most common entry points for property crime offenders. Unfortunately, manufacturer's latches on windows aren't always effective and can sometimes be weak. If you feel this might be the case for you, beef up security with locks or key-operated levers. Contact your local locksmith or hardware store for suggestions on lock mechanisms, keeping fire safety a consideration in your selections.

Further to your CPTED techniques, you can also consider a few other solutions for window security:

- Reinforce glass with window security film.
- Install window or glass break sensors.
- Add window bars.

Plant prickly bushes under first-floor windows and be sure to keep them trimmed.



## Sliding Doors



Sliding patio doors are a feature of many dwellings. Unfortunately, they are also a favourite target for burglars.



### How burglars get in

Most sliding patio doors are equipped with a single locking mechanism located midway on the outside edge of the sliding panel. The spurred bolt of the lock engages the lip of the strike plate or "keeper" mounted on the frame. Because of space limitations, these locks are often weak and ineffective. They can be pried open with a tool, cut with a hacksaw or simply unhooked by jiggling the panel.

# TARGET HARDENING: WINDOWS/SLIDING DOORS

The lock is just one of a patio door's weaknesses:

- Some doors can be lifted out of their tracks from the outside, even when closed.
- The stationary panel is often held in place by retaining brackets fastened to the jamb with screws that are exposed to the outside; an intruder only has to remove the screws to open the door.
- Many aluminum and vinyl doors can be forced apart at the interlock (where the closed doors overlap) without the glass breaking, allowing a burglar to reach in and unlock the doors.

Burglars can also break the glass on a patio door, but this isn't common, as the sound would attract attention. Most entries are achieved by breaking the lock or otherwise forcing the door.

## Auxiliary Security Devices

To compensate for the lack of effective locks on most patio doors, manufacturers have produced a wide range of add-on security devices. Basically, there are 4 options for consideration:

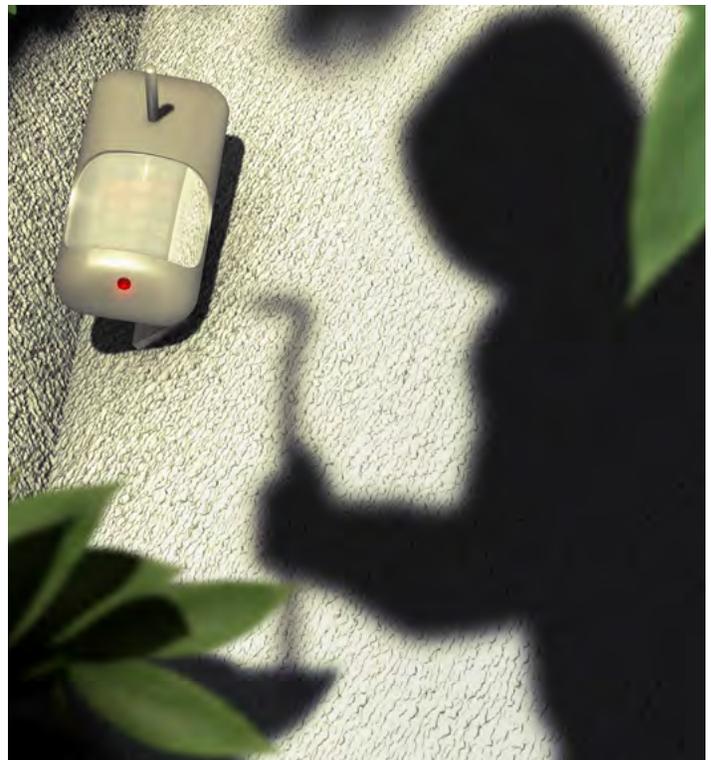


- Jimmy plate (to prevent prying of door).
- Security bars. You can also make a simple safety bar by cutting a length of wood (an old hockey stick or broom handle is ideal) to fit snugly into the bottom channel/track of the sliding panel.
- Auxiliary locks (foot or window locks).
- Window security film.

These devices should be used in combination with one another and with the door's existing lock to prevent horizontal, vertical and rotating motion of the door.

## Lights

Another simple thing you can do around your house or strata property is to install motion sensor lights.



# LOCKSMITHS

If you have ever had to search for a locksmith after losing your keys or had them stolen as a result of a break and enter, you know that there are pages and pages of listings in the Yellow Pages or on internet classified sites. What you may not know, is that a number of them are not licensed or are running businesses without the correct licensing, which puts you at risk of being further victimized during a time of crisis.

Under British Columbia's Security Services Act, businesses and individuals offering security services must hold a valid security license issued by the Registrar of Security Services. There are two types of licenses that a locksmith can hold, both of which are issued by the provincial government.

1. An unrestricted license requires two years of apprenticeship under supervision and the holder should be able to provide a security business license.
2. An 'Under Supervision' license allows a person to perform the work of a locksmith while under direct supervision of a fully licensed locksmith. Anyone can apply for this license online with no prior training or experience. The fee is \$120.

Unfortunately, many fly-by-night businesses found on internet sites are not operating with the appropriate licensing. The good news is that you can verify a security worker license online through the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

here: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/security/utilities/>

Here is what a properly licensed locksmith or locksmith company will have:

- A business license.
- At least one person with their unrestricted security license.
- \$1 million liability insurance – bonding is not required.
- WCB coverage (check their website for a clearance letter).

When you are shopping for a reputable locksmith, you should ask that they have all of the appropriate licensing and insurance. If they don't, do not use them.

It is a good practice to seek out reputable companies before you need one in the middle of the night. Check with the Better Business Bureau to see if they are listed and/or have had complaints and ask others for recommendations.



# BLOCK WATCH PROPERTY LOG

Use the Block Watch fillable form to help you in documenting your property. This will increase the chances of having your property returned to you if it is ever stolen, or goes missing.

## LOCK IT!

It takes only seconds for something to be stolen.

- Ensure your property is secured with an appropriate locking device that's in good working order.
- Close and lock your garage door if it's out of view.
- Don't leave valuables in your vehicle.

## ENGRAVE IT!

Consider engraving your property, or marking it with a permanent identifier. Some of your local community policing centres may offer engraving services or allow you to sign one out to mark your personal property.

- Ensure the marking is permanent!
- Engrave your B.C. driver's license or B.C. Identification Card number on the property.

## PHOTOGRAPH IT!

Take photos or videos of items which are hard to mark such as jewelry, art, family heirlooms and antiques. Take a picture of yourself with them, and save them to a place which is accessible. You can also video contents of an entire room.

## DOCUMENT IT!

Record your property/purchases on paper or on an electronic spreadsheet. You can use the fillable spreadsheet on the next page. You can also download a similar form from [blockwatch.com](http://blockwatch.com) where you can include images of your property.

Record the following information:

- Serial number
- Make
- Model
- Colour
- Any identifying or unique marks

Save this information in multiple locations which is easily accessible and be sure to retain a hard copy. If items don't have serial numbers, consider engraving your DL number, government issued ID number or even your phone number. Do not use your SIN number.

## REPORT IT!

If your property is stolen or missing please report it. If it's ever recovered in a crime, police will then be able to contact you and return it.







# Participating Household List

## Complex

Complex Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Participating households: \_\_\_\_\_

*We the undersigned, wish to participate in the Block Watch program. Permission is hereby given to provide the Block Watch Office with my name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Unlisted phone numbers may be withheld if desired. The Block Watch program does not disseminate, share or distribute this information to anyone and will remove the information at my request.*

*I will communicate with the Captain what information I wish to be shared with both the Block Watch Office and the group. I understand that the Captain/Co-Captain and our local Block Watch Office will manage my personal information in accordance with BCS-Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) legislation. If I require further clarification, I will contact my local Block Watch Office.*

Block Watch number: \_\_\_\_\_

### LIST OF BLOCK WATCH PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS - WITH PERMISSION

	Name	Unit #	Address	Email	Phone	Permissions
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						



# Participating Household List

## Residential

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Captain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Participating households: \_\_\_\_\_

*We the undersigned, wish to participate in the Block Watch program. Permission is hereby given to provide the Block Watch Office with my name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Unlisted phone numbers may be withheld if desired. The Block Watch program does not disseminate, share or distribute this information to anyone and will remove the information at my request.*

*I will communicate with the Captain what information I wish to be shared with both the Block Watch Office and the group. I understand that the Captain/Co-Captain and our local Block Watch Office will manage my personal information in accordance with BC's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) legislation. If I require further clarification, I will contact my local Block Watch Office.*

Block Watch number: \_\_\_\_\_

### LIST OF BLOCK WATCH PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS - WITH PERMISSION

	Name	Address	Email	Phone	Permission to Share Info
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

# GRAFFITI

The Block Watch Office gets asked quite often what residents and/or businesses can do if they find themselves victims of a Mischief, such as graffiti.

If you witness a person or persons painting graffiti and they tag on your property or business, please call 9-1-1 for in-progress calls.

If the suspect has left and is no longer on scene, please be sure to report the graffiti by either calling non-emergency or report the incident online if your local police department's website allows.

Take a photo of the graffiti. Many graffiti artists will paint a tag specific to their work and the photo may assist in identifying the person or persons who are responsible.

Check your local city website and by-laws to see if they offer any graffiti programs and/or assistance with graffiti clean up.



## Mischief under the Criminal Code of Canada, sec 430

- (1) Every one commits mischief who willfully
- (a) destroys or damages property;
  - (b) renders property dangerous, useless, inoperative or ineffective;
  - (c) obstructs, interrupts or interferes with the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property; or
  - (d) obstructs, interrupts or interferes with any person in the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property.

# CRIME STOPPERS



The Block Watch Society of BC has a partnership with Crime Stoppers BC.

For a variety of reasons, you may want to report crime anonymously. Crime Stoppers is 100% anonymous and will take your report.

There are four ways to leave an anonymous tip with Crime Stoppers:

- Web: [solvecrime.ca](http://solvecrime.ca)
- Talk: 1-800-222-8477
- Text: BCTIP and your message to CRIMES (274637)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/metrovancouvercrimestoppers](https://facebook.com/metrovancouvercrimestoppers)

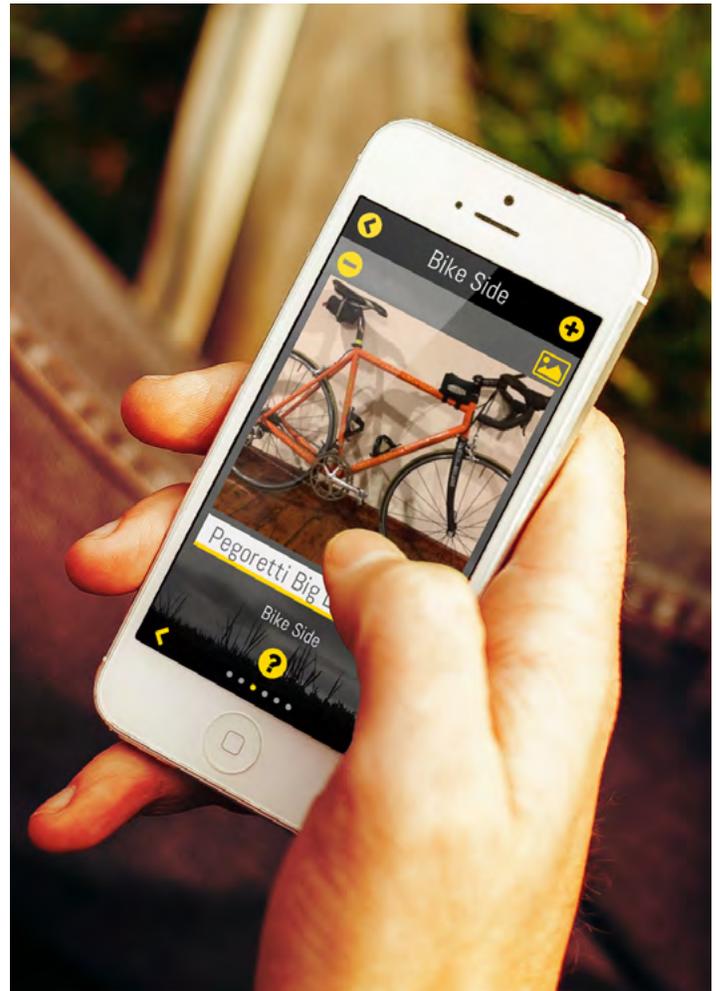
# PROJECT 529

Project 529 is a digital bicycle registration and recovery system. Police recover thousands of stolen bicycles each year, but have no way of uniting them with their owners.

Project 529 is a great tool to help combat bike theft. Join the Project 529 community today, by downloading the app. Visit [project529.ca](http://project529.ca) for details.

If you would like more information how to get involved, please contact us at [bcbikecop@icloud.com](mailto:bcbikecop@icloud.com).

You can invite the Project 529 team to your next event, block party or visit your local CPC, some of which host registration events throughout the year.



**NEVER rely on a cable lock** as a primary means to secure your bike. They are easily defeated in seconds.



**NEVER lock only the top tube.** The thief may damage your bike trying to twist the lock apart, or can ride away if they defeat the rack.



**NEVER lock only a wheel.** Thieves will quickly remove it, attach a stolen wheel and ride away on your bike.

**NEVER leave your bike locked up outdoors overnight.** Any lock can be defeated with enough time and the right tools.

**NEVER leave your bike unlocked in your garage, bike cage, balcony or on your car.** About a quarter of stolen bikes are taken from these locations.



Bike theft is a \$500 million annual epidemic in North America - a bike is stolen every 30 seconds.

Bike thefts have increased 49% in Vancouver since the 2010 games.

1,000's of recovered bikes go to auction each year in BC because the police cannot identify owners.

Stolen bikes are often used to commit secondary crimes like Theft From Auto and Break & Enters.

Most bikes parked outdoors are not secured properly.

About 20% of bikes are stolen from indoor locations, often unlocked.

Simple steps to shield against bike theft.

[www.529garage.ca](http://www.529garage.ca)



# CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time and commitment in completing your Block Watch training. We hope you find this guide and information helpful in starting and maintaining your Block Watch. If you have any questions about the crime prevention techniques outlined in your guide, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Block Watch Office.

## Block Watch Office Contact Information:

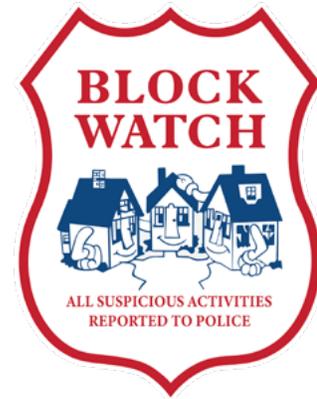
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Block Watch Society of BC  
[blockwatch.com](http://blockwatch.com)



**VANCOUVER POLICE  
FOUNDATION**