



Marijuana

Growing marihuana is a dangerous business. Grow rips are occurring virtually every day, but most of them go unreported. In fact, within the past 30 days there have been 13 marihuana grow rips or attempted grow rips in Surrey alone. Investigators are becoming increasingly concerned with the targeting of homes and innocent families who are not associated to the marihuana trade. This is an example of why marihuana grow operations pose a serious threat to public safety.

Most marihuana grow operations are run by organized crime groups who export the drug to the US where it is traded for either cash, cocaine or guns which are then smuggled back into our communities. If you think that organized crime doesn't affect you, think again. Organized crime has reached major proportions throughout BC. It is estimated that organized crime touches many aspects of our lives including grow ops and grow rips, drug addiction, car theft, break and enters, gang violence, assaults, gambling addiction, illegal activities involving children, and defrauding seniors of their life savings. Organized crime is a major economic drain on insurance costs, policing, the justice system and even natural resource utility costs.

The RCMP in BC is fighting crime networks with an integrated strategy that includes cooperation between different police and federal agencies as well as through

partnerships with organizations and associations impacted by organized crime.

Anyone with information about this crime is asked to contact Richmond RCMP's Green Team at 604 278-1212, or if you wish to remain anonymous, call CrimeStoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

Report that crime...we cannot convince some people to report crime. They say, "I left the car unlocked and am too embarrassed to report it," "the police won't/can't do anything about it," or "nothing was taken". We have to convince such people that they are only looking at things from a personal view instead of a community view. Maybe nothing can be done about their personal victimization at the time, but if the police are not informed they cannot take action, increase patrols in the area, or be aware of trends.

We need to help the police by letting them know what is occurring by reporting all crime.



Reporting a Suspicious Drug House

The number of "grow ops" and drug seizures in Richmond has dramatically increased over the last few years.

In addition to the amount of Police resources spent dealing with grow ops and trafficking of the drugs, there are many other serious community consequences associated with these crimes. Marijuana grow ops are continuously linked to property crimes and crimes of violence. In addition to finding stolen property inside these home, the Richmond RCMP Detachment has investigated several home invasions where thieves have broken into grow houses to steal the marijuana crop being produced. Some recent home invasions involved innocent families that had moved into a previous grow op house or were living close by one and were mistakenly victimized. The scary thing is that if your house looks like a grow op, you could be a target for this increasingly growing

group of violent offenders that prey on these types of facilities. Also, many growers arm themselves with various illegal weapons and/or vicious guard dogs.

The growth and distribution of marijuana in our community is of serious concern to citizens. Often residents will launch complaints because the peace and tranquillity of their neighbourhoods has been destroyed. Neighbours put up with constant traffic, noise, smells, and often fear when they live near one of these houses.

There is something we can do to help stop marijuana growing and trafficking in Richmond. By filling out this report form when you suspect a drug house in your neighbourhood you supply the RCMP with some very important information. Once you have completed the attached forms, please return them to the Richmond RCMP Detachment - Attention: Block Watch, 6900 Minoru Blvd., Richmond, BC V6Y 1Y3

Thank you for your interest in helping to solve this problem. Together, we can create safer communities for all present and future Richmond residents.

Is There a Grow Op in Your Neighbourhood?

The following are characteristics of typical grow op houses. It is important to note that a positive response to some of these questions does not mean it is a grow op house and that the residents are involved in criminal activity. Please use this questionnaire as a basic guideline only.

1. Suspects do not appear to regularly attend jobs but drive expensive vehicles.
2. There are dark coverings over some of the windows.
3. Rooms in the house or outbuildings seem to be illuminated all the time.
4. There is heavy condensation on the windows. Absence of frost or snow on the roof when all other houses have frost or snow. Or growers put a fan in the window to increase air circulation and that blows the curtains around, if that is occurring at night and during the day, that is an indicator.
5. A variety of extra measures have been taken to protect the house, i.e., new fencing, guard dogs, bars on the windows, etc. Entry is exclusively through the automatic garage doors. Residents are hardly ever seen out of their cars.
6. There is a strange odour emanating from the house.
7. Humming noises such as that of a fan are heard.
8. There is unusual or modified wiring on the exterior of the house.
9. The hydro meter can be seen spinning unusually fast, however, you need to be aware that this can be due to all the appliances and lights being on. If possible, a couple of checks throughout the day or night might confirm high consumption even when the appliances and lights seem to be off. Growers have to have most of their lights on for at least 12 - 18 hours at a time.
10. Residents that keep to themselves is one thing but growers who don't seem to fraternize at all with neighbours and avoid all contact is another.
11. Quantities of growing equipment and supplies are seen to be taken into the house, shed or garage, yet no flowers or garden at the house. Often these supplies are purchased in the winter.
12. There are pots, soil, hoses and nutrients scattered around the property.
13. The house can appear to be vacant, the yard is not well-tended, and flyers are accumulating at the door.
14. There are hoses running from doors or windows on the exterior of the house.
15. Instances of visitors parking down the street and walking to the house.
16. Condominiums and high rise buildings are increasingly being used for production. If you see someone moving in and they disappear or are gone for long periods of time, that might be suspicious. Or better still, you never see them moving in. Growers don't like their neighbours to see them moving large fans, pots and soil in. There is also construction noises associated to accommodate a marijuana production facility.
17. The occupants appear overnight (they moved in during the night).
18. Your new neighbour has two kids and you see them periodically but never see the neighbours going out to drive or walk the kids to school.
19. The neighbours tend the lawn and that's the only time you ever see them or the kids. Or every now and again, you see someone outside having a cigarette and sometimes it is not the same person.

20. Garbage days, there is no garbage. Or you never see activity at the house but there is a lot of garbage.
21. There are construction sounds in a new building which shouldn't need renovations.

For every suspicious indicator, there is always a counter-measure that the growers use and they are getting very good at developing them!

Please note: Grow ops themselves can be lived in or tended by visiting gardeners. The RCMP see a lot of tending operations now where the whole house is used, on the other hand, sometimes only a basement suite is used (it's still profitable!).

Is There a Drug House in Your Neighbourhood?

1. There are several persons in and out of the house throughout the day and night. They often park down the street and walk to the house.
2. Needles, papers, rubber bands, baggies discarded near the house in question.

Please note: The Police will treat every tip seriously but there are a lot of tips! Some tips are up to two years old. Those are the ones we still think are grows but do not have enough evidence to get the search warrant. Our callers may not even know we've been by so there may be a perception that we don't think their tip or concerns are valid. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Currently the RCMP's greatest concern is high rise and condominium grows.

Who to Call

Richmond RCMP Non-Emergency Line: (604) 278-1212
Crime Stoppers Tips Line: (604) 669-8477
Block Watch Program Office: (604) 207-4790

Calling 9-1-1

If you call 9-1-1 by mistake, please stay on the line and let the operator know you have made a mistake.

Do not program 9-1-1 into your programmable phone, it is too easy to accidentally call 9-1-1.

If you call 9-1-1 and cannot speak, help can still be sent to you. This problem is not uncommon, sometimes peoples are panicked or disoriented when they call in an emergency, or they are in personal danger and cannot speak.



School Safety on the Road!

Wayne G Mercer
Supervisor, Parking Program
City of Richmond

Richmond's student population will be back at the books in September and everyone from the School Board, the City of Richmond to the parents want to ensure that they are as safe as possible. There are many worthwhile group initiatives to promote alternative methods to get to school and back including walking, cycling, pooling for walking or driving, etc. We must all work together to reduce the dangerous congestion and confusion during morning and afternoon rushes. The City's Bylaw enforcement team will be doing their part to discourage illegal stopping and parking and, due to the volume of violations and our inability to serve each one in person, some drivers may receive these Notices in the mail. All schools have clearly marked No Stopping zones to ensure that carefree, young students are not left to cross the road through erratic, moving vehicles. Encourage alternative methods to promote their health and safety but, if you have to drive your child to school, be sure to use designated loading zones or allow them to walk the last couple of blocks. Should you want to get involved, please contact your PAC coordinator at the school or, if you have any questions on enforcement, call our department at 604.276.4345.



Block Watch Captain Martha Lastik and the Broadmoor Blvd. group's annual pot luck. A very enthusiastic brunch and party was enjoyed by all!



People enjoying the day where a Block Watch Garage Sale for Larkspur Ave. and Bellflower Drive included up to 25 lawns with all sorts of items and a happy crowd of buyers and sellers!" submitted by Block Watch Captain Wilf Lawson. Another great way to meet your neighbours!



Captain Tony Banting, his wife Pat, Co-Captain Raphael Lui and wife Jackie, along with the rest of the Mirabel Court Block Watch at their Annual Potluck Picnic.

Congratulations!

Richmond Block Watch would like to thank Coast Capital Insurance Services Ltd. for sponsoring our summer contest to promote our Home Security Checks program. The lucky winners are: Barry and Kay Ogilvie; Marie Murtagh; Elaine Dinnell and Iveta Williams. Congratulations to the winners!

We would like to thank everyone for entering the draw.



To listen to a recorded message listing the weekly residential break and enters, please call 604 207-4715.

Look for the monthly Island Beat crime prevention newspaper column in the Richmond Review. This column is co-written by Cst. Anette Martin and Cst. Julie Powroznik of the Richmond RCMP Crime Prevention Unit and Wendy Milford and Sheila Yamamoto of the Richmond Block Watch program.

