



Introducing S/Sgt. Colin Abel

S/Sgt. Colin Abel is in charge of the Community Policing Section at Richmond Detachment. This includes the Bike Squad, Steveston and South Arm Community Police Stations, School Liaison, Crime Prevention, Block Watch, Victim Services and the Youth Intervention Program.

There are a total of 29 regular police officers and 6 city staff that form the unit.

Colin was born in east Vancouver and went to Windermere High School where he graduated in 1970. He joined the RCMP in 1975 and was posted to Chilliwack Detachment. In 1981, he was transferred to the "E" Division Headquarters' Immigration and Passport Section. It was during this time he took VIP training and subsequently served as a bodyguard and security driver for such people as the Queen, Prince Charles and Princess Diana, the Pope, Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher and many others. In 1987, he was transferred to White Rock Detachment where he spent three summers "on the beach". In 1989, he was promoted to Corporal and returned to the Immigration and Passport Section. In 1994, he was transferred to the RCMP Fairmont Training Academy in Vancouver where he was in charge of programs relating to recruits and their trainers, boat courses, tactical troop, armed ship-boarding and E.R.T. training. In 1999, he came to Richmond as a S/Sgt. in charge of "C" Watch where he spent two years before getting the Community Policing job in September of 2001.

"The Block Watch program is a very important part of the community in Richmond. Both Wendy Milford and Sheila Yamamoto are dedicated workers and are doing a great job with the existing volunteers and I know they are beating down doors to

get more people involved in this worthwhile initiative. Their work and all of you who assist them in making Richmond a safer place to live does not go unnoticed by the upper management of Richmond Detachment. Keep up the great work. I have met some of you in the past and look forward to meeting more of you at future events and meetings. Thank you all for your commitment to this program!"

Tips, Tips and more Tips

We are having a contest - the Block Watch participant who submits the best safety tip will win a fire extinguisher. Please mail your tip to: Block Watch, 6900 Minoru Blvd., Richmond, B.C., V6Y 1Y3 or fax it to (604) 207-4792 by August 1st, the winner will be announced in the next newsletter.

Thank you to the RCMP members for suggesting the following tips:

"Make your home security efforts obvious. For example, in ground floor windows, place a length of 2/2 wood to prevent them from being opened. When a criminal sees an actual example of your attempts to secure your home, he might go somewhere else. This example also might force the criminal to smash your window, making a lot of noise, and hopefully, scaring him away or alerting a neighbour." **S/Sgt. Colin Abel**

"Get to know your neighbours. You never know when they'll see something odd in the neighbourhood and report it to the RCMP. If the neighbourhood gets to know each other...you can count on them for assistance when needed." **Cst. Jolaine Percival**, School Liaison Officer

"Put a lock on the gate to your backyard. This will restrict access to potential Break and Enter offenders who like the backyard because of privacy and easy entry through sliding glass doors frequently found at the back of the house." **Cst. Julie Powroznik**, Crime Prevention Unit



"A well-lit entrance is a deterrent to criminals, motion sensor lights are particularly effective. However, your light bulbs should be protected with a cage covering or mounted high to prevent breakage or tampering." **Cst. Tia Sullivan**, School Liaison Officer

"Change all locks immediately after moving into a new home/apartment to eliminate the possibility of someone using an old key to gain entry." **Cst. Jennifer Schiffner**, School Liaison Officer

"Lock your doors - 80% of household break-ins are committed by going through a door. Make sure you have adequate doorframes and locking mechanisms in place. Exterior doors should be at least 1 3/4" thick and should be of solid construction. All exterior doors should be equipped with a sturdy, high quality deadbolt lock with a minimum 1 1/2" throw and 3" screws." **Cst. Lisa McMullin**, South Arm Community Police Station

"Black on white or white on black: these combinations are the most visible to emergency response teams. Make it easy for them, ensure your house numbers are well-lit and visible from the street at night. If you have called for an emergency vehicle, remember to turn on your outside lights to help them find your house quicker. Remember: seconds count in an emergency." **Cpl. Paul Fox**, Police Dog Section

"Please remember to watch out for any suspicious behaviour near schools - let's prevent school vandalism before it happens!" **Wendy Milford**, Block Watch Coordinator

"Empty boxes from newly purchased electronic equipment are inviting signs to opportunistic thieves when left outside (or in the recycling on garbage day!). Instead, take the boxes to the recycling depot." **Sheila Yamamoto**, Assistant Block Watch Coordinator

Other Safety Tips:

It's time to vacuum your smoke alarm - you should vacuum inside the alarm to ensure dust isn't blocking the sensor chamber. Check the battery every month, replace it every year and replace the entire alarm every few years.

Every year the RCMP receive reports of theft while people are working in their yards - remember to lock your doors - even if you are in your own yard! When finished, remember to store all your gardening tools, as burglars are reluctant to carry their own and they will look for tools to use at the scene of their crimes.

Check your garden for overgrown trees and shrubs that may make

your house a perfect target for a burglar. Cut back trees and shrubs to keep your doors and windows visible from the street. Or plant thorny bushes under windows to ward off burglars

Before leaving on vacation, did you remember to:

- 1) use timers for lights (indoors and outdoors) and a radio, set at irregular times
- 2) turn down the volume of your home phone, so no one can hear it ringing from the outside
- 3) don't leave a message on your answering machine saying you are away
- 4) consider storing your valuables in a safety deposit box
- 5) give a house key and the alarm code to a trusted neighbour or friend, and ask them to collect your mail and occasionally park in your driveway overnight
- 6) try to be as discreet as possible when departing, don't leave a packed car in the driveway overnight
- 7) cancel your newspaper
- 8) if away for an extended period, arrange for regular yard maintenance
- 9) if away for an extended period, disable your vehicle, don't provide easy transportation for burglars

Car travel safety tips:

- 1) Pull completely off the road and turn on emergency flashers.
- 2) Lock all doors.
- 3) If someone approaches, close the windows, ask them to call the Police, your auto club, or a service station. If you feel threatened, blow the horn non-stop to alert passers-by.
- 4) Remember to carry plenty of fluids. (Water, Juice, etc.)
- 5) Carry flares to illuminate your car at night.
- 6) Carry a reflective triangle to warn other drivers of your presence.

Protective Security Film for Glass

by John D'Alessandro, Seaton Road Block Watch Captain

Security film for glass is becoming more common in home protection. Dr. Daniel Fox originally invented Lexan® polycarbonate resin (a tough heat resistant plastic) in 1953 while working for General Electric. It was used as a defence against terrorism, violence, and natural disasters.

Today, homeowners are discovering how this unique product can help vulnerable areas become more secure from threats such as burglary, accidents, storms and fires. It can also act as a shield to protect against ultraviolet rays.

With protective film covering a glass surface, the glass may shatter, but the film will hold it in place. A burglar can break a window in a few seconds to gain access to your home. By having the security film installed, attempted blows are resisted, keeping the glass intact.

As a fire begins, windows and glass doors can easily shatter when subjected to pressure from radiated heat. When this occurs, security film greatly reduces the risk of shattering to minimize the fire and resulting damage by reducing the oxygen that pours in from these openings.

Another benefit of security film is that it can reduce damage caused by earthquake and windstorms by keeping glass intact. This helps to minimize property damage and also protect against looting.

Security film facts:

- it is strong and durable, up to 300 times stronger than glass
- invisible security and safety
- optically clear, distortion free and scratch resistant
- protection from UV rays
- holds shattered glass together, preventing harm and damage

Security film for glass can play an integral role in your home security plan. Supplier information is available in your local Yellow Pages under the Security section.

Garage Sales Tips

- 1) Lock all doors and windows including the garage. Close all drapes and blinds.
- 2) Keep money out of sight - use a fanny pack.
- 3) Do not allow access to your home phone or washroom. Direct people to the nearest phone booth and/or service station.

Bike Security

- 1) Never leave your bike unlocked and use a high quality hardened steel lock. Lock your bike in a well-lit, busy area to an immovable object with the lock through both the wheels and the frame. Even when stored in your locked garage, your bike should be locked up.
- 2) If you have a quick-release seat post or wheel, make sure you take them with you.
- 3) Engrave your (or your children's) bike with your BC Driver's License (remember to engrave each removable part, i.e., seat post, handle bars, fork stem, frame, etc.).
- 4) Never leave parcels or bike accessories (pumps, water bottles) on your unattended bike.
- 5) Consider using two different types of locks to make theft more difficult and time consuming.
- 6) Keep your lock away from the ground, where it can be easily smashed.
- 7) Keep a record of the essential information on your bike. If your bike is stolen, the Police will require this information.
- 8) Check your homeowners insurance to be certain your bike is properly insured. If it has a value exceeding \$500 you may think about putting some extra coverage on.

Richmond Society for Community Living (Avenues)

A very big Thank You to the great volunteers at Avenues who deliver all the Block Watch newsletters to our Captain's homes. They deliver in rain, sun and occasionally snow! We really appreciate their help!



Volunteers: Lauretta Harkness, Meagan Leahy, Joy O'Conner, Melody Edgars, Susan Robertson, Cathy Shannon, Kent Takai, Grace Tang, Grace Choi, Robert Grad, Mary Cirmi, Doug Eastwood and Vicki Hemmel Bauer

Grow Op Meeting

We held our first Grow Op meeting on March 7th. Thank you to **Cst. Ross Joaquin** of the Richmond Green Clean Team, **Captain Gordon Gill** of the Richmond Fire Department and Block Watch Captain, **Mr. Peter Bellinger**. The meeting focus was to learn what Block Watch members can do to help the RCMP in ridding our neighbourhoods of grow ops. We will be having another meeting (Fall 2002), if interested in attending, please call the **Block Watch office at (604) 207-4790** to register.

Survey Results:

Last fall, 62 Captains and 23 Co-Captains answered our 1st survey, here are some of the results: 56 people were concerned about Auto Thefts; 49 people were concerned about Grow Ops; 42 people rated the BW program as very good, 38 rated it as good and 9 rated it as fair. 33 people rated the communication with BW Program staff as very good, 40 as good and 7 as fair.

Thank you to all the people who took the time to complete the survey. We are circulating our 2nd survey this fall, if you would like to receive a copy, please call the **Block Watch office at (604) 207-4790**.

New Captain/Co-Captain Training

A meeting was held on February 7th. Welcome and thank you to those who attended. If you are interested in attending the next session (Fall 2002), please call **Wendy Milford at (604) 207-4790**.

Auto Theft - for Complexes

Another first was our Auto Theft - for Complexes meeting held on March 21st. Thank you to **Alex Lee**, ICBC Regional Loss Prevention Co-ordinator and **Darren Sutherland** from the Richmond RCMP Citizen's Crime Watch program. Alex spoke on how to reduce your chances of having your car stolen and Darren gave a Crime Watch overview and what Block Watch members can do to help recover abandoned/stolen vehicles. We will be having an Auto Theft - for Single Family Dwellings (Fall 2002), if interested in attending, please call the **Block Watch office (604) 207-4790** to register.

Chinese Participant Manual and Handouts

The Participant Manual and handouts are now available in Chinese, please call the **Block Watch office at (604) 207-4790** to receive a copy. The translation was paid for in part by a donation from the Vancouver Metropolitan Lions Club.

Three other new handouts are now available:

- 1) **Home & Personal Security Tips**
- 2) **Apartment / Condominium Security Tips**
- 3) **How to Report a Suspicious Drug House**

Please call the **Block Watch office at (604) 207-4790** to receive copies.

