

CRIME PREVENTION

WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT CRIME

NEWSLETTER

FIFA World Cup Scams

The World Cup is coming to Vancouver this year between June and July. While it is a thrilling time for football fans, it is also an exciting time for fraudsters who are looking to capitalize on passionate fans looking to buy tickets or prepare a stay. The tickets are selling for thousands of dollars and short term rentals are increasing in price. Be careful of these scams as you, or someone you know, prepares for the global event.

Ticket Scams

One way fraudsters scam people is by designing fake websites that look like legitimate websites. When their victims log into the fake site and make a payment, the transaction will fail. At this point, they have already gathered your log in credentials and financial information. Other scams involve the use of secondary marketplaces and resale sites. Fraudsters post fake listings that are cheap, in order to gain interest from their victims. Although some resale websites claim to be safe, it can be difficult to verify the authenticity of the tickets. In addition, many of these platforms are unofficial and do not carry FIFA World Cup branding. To protect yourself, always do your research on secondary markets and purchase your tickets through trusted sources like FIFA's verified resale site. Never trust "too good to be true" deals as fraudsters use these to prey on desperate fans. Lastly do not buy physical tickets as FIFA will only be selling mobile tickets.



Rental Scams

There will be high demand for hotels and Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs) during this time. When booking hotels, use a reputable websites and review their terms and conditions. Contact the hotel directly to confirm your reservation. For B&Bs, scammers create fake listings for properties that don't exist, aren't actually available, or belong to someone else. They lure in people using stock or stolen images to make the listing look legitimate. Scammers can also post these rental properties on different rental sites. This tactic allow scammers to cancel lower-priced bookings if another guest books at a higher rate elsewhere. It leaves guests in a difficult position because scammers may cancel last minute. Lastly, beware of deceptive descriptions. This scam occurs when hosts provide misleading information in their listing. The description can be exaggerated with inaccurate details or edited images to make the rental more appealing. In all these situations once the guest arrives at the property, they may find that the address doesn't exist or the residence does not look like the one they rented. To protect yourself, always do your research by reading reviews carefully. Double check the address to check that it is a legitimate residence. Reverse image search the property to check that it is not a stock image or a reposted property.



Apartment Break & Enter Prevention

As our city continues to grow in size, more and more properties are being converted into apartment buildings. Some of these buildings have commercial units below bringing in more foot traffic from customers, guests, and employees. In addition, most parkades are shared between the residential and commercial parts of the building. Unfortunately, this also brings in suspicious activity and crime. Therefore, it is crucial for us to highlight some smart behaviors to prevent your apartment from being a target for crime.

Wait for the garage gate to close before driving away – One primary entry point for thieves is the garage gate. They may tailgate other vehicles, wait nearby to enter on foot, or wait for a resident to drive away before the gate closes. Once thieves gain entry, they look into vehicles and break into them. In some cases, thieves can wander around the parkade and break into storage rooms and bike lockers. The best way to prevent these crimes is to wait for the garage gate to close behind you before you drive away. Opportunistic thieves are less likely to commit a crime if they know someone has spotted them.



Do not hold the door for strangers – While holding the door for strangers is a polite action to do, it is not safe in terms of crime prevention. You do not know whether or not that person is a resident or a potential thief. Thus, let them know to buzz in or use their own key to gain entry. Common target area after entry is the mail room because it is the most convenient and the first area they see. In some apartments, packages are left to the side of the entrance, becoming an easy grab for thieves.

Secure your sliding door and windows - Some apartment buildings have townhouse and ground level units. The common entry points are sliding door and windows. Reinforce these points of entry by adding track stoppers and sliding door locks. Alarms are also a great addition as they provide an audible deterrent and may alert neighbours of an unwanted entry.

Treat your keys and door fobs like gold – If you lose your keys or have your keys stolen, replace your lock immediately and report missing keys and fobs to your property management. Do not leave your key in your vehicle and store them in a safe location.

Always report suspicious activity - If you see anything suspicious, report it immediately to police, and if applicable, the concierge or property management.

Do not buzz everyone through – Potential thieves buzz random numbers hoping someone will let them in. Always ask who is on the other end before you let them in even when you are expecting guests or a delivery.

Not all apartments have the luxury of a 24/7 concierge or security. It is the residents' responsibility to keep their community safe. All it takes is one person to make a mistake for an opportunistic thief to gain entry. You can help make a difference in your building by following these tips to keep your building safe and reporting all suspicious activity to police.



Three Tips to Prevent Theft From Auto

Theft from auto is a crime of opportunity. Never assume a theft will not happen to you because it only takes an opportunity and a few seconds to break into your vehicle. Common stolen items include backpacks, jackets, credit cards, electronics, wallets, keys, and sunglasses. Even when you know the jacket or backpack is empty of valuables, thieves will still take a chance because they do not know it is empty. They are hoping your phone, wallet, or an item is in your bag or jacket. The best way to prevent a theft from auto is to remember the following three rules:



- **Lock it** – A simple but effective tip is to lock your vehicle at all times, even when it is parked in your driveway or in a private parkade.
- **Remove it** – Take all items with you and leave nothing in plain site. Thieves will take the risk to break into your vehicle for anything that may look valuable to them.
- **Hide it** – If you cannot remove the item from your car, put it in the trunk where it is hidden and out of sight.

To Start a Block Watch Group

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

Select a Group Lead

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

Recruit and build your group

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

Complete activation of your team

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

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

BUSINESS LINK

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Preventing Break & Enters: Alarms

An alarm system is one of the most effective tools a business can invest in to safeguard their property. These systems are designed to detect unauthorized entry and trigger an immediate response to prevent break-ins and other security breaches. Contact sensors can help monitor points of entry, while glass break alarms detect the sound of breaking glass. Motion detectors alert you of movement within the space once an intruder is inside. Together, these three elements provide after-hours security and comprehensive monitoring for unauthorized activity. Relying on only one type of alarm sensor is not recommended, as each has its own unique limitations. For example, a contact sensor is effective at detecting a door or window that has been forced open. However, it cannot detect glass break. Pairing contact sensors with glass break alarms help address this gap and strengthens overall security.



Some sensors and alarms are able to connect to a monitoring company or your phone. They are able to give you real time notifications if someone gains entry. In some instances, the monitoring company can contact the police and alert them of a break and enter. While other alarms can create a loud noise scaring away thieves and bringing attention to the business. Lastly, some alarm companies provide their clients with stickers and signage to display in front of their business. This signage provides a visible deterrent letting thieves know the property is alarmed and has proper surveillance.

To further strengthen your alarm system, you can pair it with security cameras. Security cameras act as a second set of eyes for your business. They also help identify false alarms and provide valuable evidentiary information to police if a break-in occurs. Regularly check that you are able to access the footage and it is downloadable.

Please report all suspicious or criminal activity to the police.

Richmond RCMP Non-Emergency line [604-278-1212](tel:604-278-1212). If you witness a crime in progress, dial **9-1-1**.

Online reporting available at bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/richmond/report for the following:

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

