



## Rural Crime Watch News – June 2019



### Monthly Update to Members of Cochrane Foothills Protective Association

**Vacation time!** Whether we plan a stay-cation or an away-cation, we start from our home. Here are some tips to increase our peace and security.

- Use social media to report *after* the vacation. An announcement of a time to be away may be information to a criminal about an opportunity to check out. Intruders believe when people are away, there is enough time to break, enter and grab before an alarm brings a response.
- Being 'noticeably at home' reduces the risk of intrusion. Next best is the perception of someone at home. Usual cues to an intruder might be movement, yard maintenance and several lights on variable timers.
- Minimize personal items as you travel. A lost address book or chequebook gives thieves an immediate lead to your address and identity theft. Minimize personal information on your Smartphone in case it is lost. Lock personal records securely in your home and have photo cache of these items with someone else. Carry the phone numbers (without account ID) needed to call if your wallet is stolen or misplaced.
- A mail build up signals absence. Stop the mail or have a neighbour pick it up for you. Ask a neighbour to check for parcels and for unexpected visitors to your home. Be part of neighbour pacts to lookout for each other.
- Park your vehicles in the garage. Remove any valuables and lock the vehicle as well.
- Use a smart doorbell that takes video and is interactive through the internet. These work 24/7 with your cell phone.



**Examples of suspicious vehicle activity** A key to deterring thieves is to **OBSERVE, RECORD, REPORT** while they are scouting for a target. Be aware of suspicious vehicle activity. We all frequently drive rural roads and are more likely to encounter suspicious activity while driving. Consider these road related examples:

- A vehicle parked on roadway or entrances to fields – especially with no apparent purpose.
- Vehicles or people or a trailer in a yard when not expected, or in an abandoned yard site
- A vehicle driving slowly in the area and not entering any residence
- A slow moving vehicle(s) seen in several areas
- Pickup truck pulling a trailer at an unusually high speed
- Pickup truck with unsecured items in the box, especially if travelling at a high speed.



- Vehicles parked in areas that are hard to see or where there may be a lookout
- Licence plates that appear deliberately obscured
- Vehicles abandoned
- Two vehicles travelling closely together
- A vehicle that hurries off if being watched or challenged

Driving by slowly provides a good opportunity. Genuine visitors welcome directions. Intruders usually scurry away. Remember personal safety is highest consideration. If in doubt, report promptly.

**Beware of Thieves with Erratic Motivations** When observing a suspicious situation, checkout everything that is going on - people, place and time. Be aware of the possible variety of thieves with dramatically strong motivations fuelled by addictions, alcohol and sometimes an organized gang. An internet search of ‘violence, spree, arrest & vehicle’ yields thousands of hits for perspective on some of the worst situations. Common themes of many thieves are the use of one or more vehicle, several thieves, a spree of thefts in a short time, violence, weapons and drugs.

According to Sgt. Brent Keibel of the RCMP, every encounter to investigate and arrest considers the entire context. Sometimes the thieves present superhuman strength requiring several officers to intervene. “These are situations where the best response of the public is to keep safe, get as many details as practical and report promptly. Every call adds to the intelligence shared by analysts for use in deploying resources. No call is too small. Most sprees are solved by calls from the public. The safety of the public is enhanced by reporting and not engaging.”

**Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch Association** is the joint effort of 17,000 rural members in 56 local chapters throughout Alberta. See the website <https://www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/> for lots of information and links. We share experiences and tips through newsletters, websites and community meetings.



Check out the website of our local chapter - **Cochrane Foothills Protective Association**, <https://cfparcw.ca/>. Invite your neighbours to also become part of your community movement to send a message to would-be intruders. “Beware. These rural people are informed, prepared and connected to deter crime.”

**Invitation to Members** If you have any information, comments or questions to share in the next newsletter, please submit to the general CFPA email address: [info@cfparcw.ca](mailto:info@cfparcw.ca) We are Rural Crime Watch, a network of concerned residents, committed to making a safer community through basic crime prevention principles.

Our security is greatly enhanced when we work together as good rural neighbours.

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