



## Rural Crime Watch News – October 2018



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

#### Springbank Town Hall

On October 27, Councillor Kim McKylor hosted Springbankers at a Town Hall meeting on community issues. Presentations were given by MLA Leela Aheer, another on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, and others by RCW, RCMP Cst. Moore, Fire Chief Randy Smith and Lorraine Wesley Riley of RVC Law Enforcement Services. Questions centred on residence security, neighbour mutual support to prevent crime and FireSmart.

#### Fleet Drivers Reporting Suspicious Activity

Since May 2017, RCW has a developing relationship with Jepson Petroleum for their drivers to watch for suspicious vehicle activity and report to police. Jepson Petroleum is a large PetroCanada bulk fuel dealer that distributes to farms, ranches and commercial users in southern Alberta. The synergy is the 45 drivers have rural roads they commonly travel to their customers. The partnership initially focussed on their Calgary distribution and has now increased to their other centres in Southern Alberta.

Since April 2018, Southland Transportation from their Cochrane operation has encouraged their 150 school bus drivers to observe and report suspicious activity. That practice has been extended to their Okotoks centre. This is a great resource to have local drivers twice a day in their community keeping eyes and ears out for would-be criminal activity.

RCW invites other fleet operators to consider this initiative as well. We offer to meet with management and drivers and provide guidance on what may work best. More eyes and ears for safer communities!

#### Burglar, security and surveillance systems

Years ago, part of home security was a “burglar alarm”. With the advent of smart phones, WIFI and sophisticated camera technologies, more people are designing, installing, and maintaining their own systems. One shift is to real time information using the smart phone. The motion activated cameras may have 2-way sound and alerts via modem to the smart phone with email. Scrolling through the screen, one sees the real time picture and sound of each camera. The owner can then interact with visitors and call for assistance if needed. Worth checking out.

#### Digital and Online Security

Log in and password protection is basic and critical. However the abuse of the internet calls for more vigilance. Spam, scams, viruses, Trojan horses, malware and phishing are prevalent. Very basic reminders:

- 1 Do have antivirus and malware protection and keep it updated
- 2 Inform yourself on digital security and set up a cautious protocol
- 3 Open only files, email and websites that you trust
- 4 Ignore links to other websites unless sure of security

### Hunting Season

Fall is hunting season. Hunters and landowner sometimes clash as a result of misunderstanding. And some breaches of law occur. Thanks to Fish and Wildlife for the summary attached. F&W is a partner of RCW.

### Speeding on rural roads

Rural roads are used by a wide variety of travellers from pedestrians and cyclists, to standard vehicles, school busses and large slow moving farm machinery. We all know of roads where some vehicles regularly speed. This could be just over the speed limit, or dangerous driving that endangers all in the vicinity. Fines are graduated and were increased in August 2018, along with demerits. Speeding 50 km over the speed limit, racing and stunting can be offences of dangerous or careless driving with fines up to \$2,000, demerits, suspension of licence and jail terms. The dangerous driving may lead to injury or death, and reinforces the need to eliminate the abuse of rural roads by reckless drivers.

What can we do? For somewhat speeders, contact Law Enforcement Division of RVC. The response may be a patrol car for the predicted time. Or a speed reminder sign. For racing and dangerous driving, get a good description and note the time of or week. Use a video camera. These speeders are also creatures of habit and possibly have a pattern. Enlist the help of neighbours to develop best relevant information. Communicate that information to the RCMP. Road safety is for everyone.

### Recent Incident of RCW in Action

I was walking the dog in the late evening. It was completely dark. A vehicle drove moderately in and out of the cul-de-sac as I was about to enter. I was unable to get a useful description even with a bright LED light. A little further along in my walk, a different vehicle came into the area and stopped on the road. Then a second vehicle came behind. What's up? Scout and now attempt an intrusion? Gave me pause for thought and anxiety as dark and no cues of the people. I walked with our midsize dog to one vehicle and found out the driver was checking out a white truck that had driven into the driveway of my neighbour. That truck had been in another driveway while the owners were at a hockey game. A phone call to them showed no vehicle expected. The two vehicles in our cul-de-sac were neighbours checking on the suspicious vehicle. This is RCW in action. Pay attention. Check it out within your comfort and confidence limits, using neighbours as resources. No suspicious vehicle was flagged down. BTW1, the white truck belonged to the boyfriend of a babysitter! BTW 2, we use a list of cell phone numbers and group contacts on cell for RCW members in our group of 20 neighbours.

Invitation to Members If you have any information to share in the next newsletter, please submit to the general RCW email address [cochraneRuralCrimewatch@gmail.com](mailto:cochraneRuralCrimewatch@gmail.com). 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 with neighbours.

Jim Willson, [jim.willson@telus.net](mailto:jim.willson@telus.net)  
Springbank Director, Rural Crime Watch

# Use respect: contact first

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Fish and wildlife officers in Cochrane are encouraging hunters to ensure they have permission before entering onto private land.

Ethical hunters take pride in following the rules and regulations. On the other hand, a poacher is someone who breaks our hunting and fishing laws. In particular, one of the most common things poachers do, which separates them from ethical hunters, is hunting on private land without the landowner's permission.

In Alberta there are about five million acres of public land under agricultural lease that hunters may access. Whether you wish to hunt on agricultural public land or privately owned land, there are some steps you need to complete before you enter onto the land.

If you wish to access agricultural public land, you must first contact the leaseholder and provide information about your visit. Although leaseholders must allow reasonable access to the land for recreation, there are some circumstances where the leaseholder may deny or apply conditions to access.

Similarly, if you wish to access privately owned land, you must first contact the landowner, or the landowner's designated contact person, for permission. The landowner has the right to permit or deny access for any reason.

The Use Respect program is an initiative of Alberta Environment and Parks and the Alberta Conservation Association. Its purpose is to

build awareness of the rights and responsibilities of recreationists, agricultural leaseholders, and landowners, particularly as they pertain to recreational access to lands.

Under the Use Respect program, yellow and green signs are placed along the fences of potential hunting areas on both agricultural public lands and privately owned lands. These signs list the contact information of the leaseholder, landowner or a designated contact person.

The signs are intended to make it easy for hunters to meet the responsibility of contacting leaseholders or landowners before entering onto their lands. Remember, the access rights for agricultural public land and privately owned land are different.

Use respect. Always contact the leaseholder or landowner before entering onto agricultural public lands or privately owned lands.

For more information accessing agricultural public land, please visit <http://aep.alberta.ca/recreation-public-use/recreation-on-agricultural-public-land/default.aspx>

To report an incident in progress of someone hunting on private land or agricultural public land without permission, please phone the 24-hour Report A Poacher line at 1-800-642-3800.