



For Immediate Release

## **BURGLARS ARE SWITCHING TACTICS THESE DAYS TO GET INTO YOUR HOME ASK YOURSELF THIS SUMMER, “WHAT DID I LEAVE OUTSIDE?”**

***Remember the “9 at 9” approach to home security, and call police or Crime Stoppers  
if suspicious characters are casing the neighbourhood***

**Vancouver, B.C. (June 23, 2022)** – Crime trends are always changing, and the way burglars case neighbourhoods for crimes of opportunity has changed with the times too. Police are noticing crooks aren’t physically breaking into houses quite as much - but switching to using or stealing whatever they can find outside a home.

“Police tell us using garage door openers is the big one,” says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. “Just a few years ago, the main thing was to warn homeowners how to prevent crooks from breaking into doors and windows, but affordable home security alarms and video equipment are starting to change that for the better.

“What people are still forgetting are simple things like leaving your car unlocked in the driveway, which allows burglars to grab your garage door opener,” Annis says. “No need to smash windows or jimmy door locks on your home if they can just roll up your garage door. If the door leading from the garage into your house isn’t locked, you’ve just asked the burglars to ‘come right in’. And don’t leave a spare key under a flowerpot either. Everyone knows that one.”

Whether you’re going away this summer or just staying home, seriously consider not leaving anything lying around outside.

“Ladders left in the yard is another one. Within a couple of minutes, an experienced crook can climb in through your upper floor windows, rifle your bedrooms for valuables they can sell for quick cash, and be back down again before anyone notices. Making sure we put away things outside the house gives us a chance to take preventative action,” Annis says.

***“See something, say something” – it’s important***

Video security and alarms help to secure our homes, but can also give us a false sense of security leading us to leave windows, patio doors and garages open anyway on a hot day. “Crooks don’t go on vacation,” Annis adds. “If you see something out of the ordinary in your neighbourhood call police right away. Or, if you know who’s behind break-ins on your street, send an anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers. Your tip may lead to an arrest, and possibly a reward of up to \$5000.”

**BE SAFE! - USE METRO VANCOUVER CRIME STOPPERS'  
"9 AT 9" APPROACH TO HOME SECURITY "INSIDE AND OUTSIDE"**

**Nine common sense things to check every night at 9 P.M.:**

1. Remove everything from inside your car – from valuables and garage door openers, to empty bottles and spare change.
2. Roll up car windows tight and lock all the doors.
3. Make sure all garage doors are closed and locked, including the door inside that leads from the garage into your home.
4. Lock up ladders, bikes and even garden equipment.
5. Close and lock all doors and windows on your home, even if it's hot out.
6. Set the alarm and check your video security equipment – can you see your front door activity on your phone app?
7. Leave the porch light on overnight, so your front door isn't hidden in darkness.
8. Make sure boxes from online deliveries are quickly picked up from your front step.
9. Ask a neighbour to pick up newspapers and flyers from your door while you're away – a pile of papers on the doorstep says "no one's home".

*(See backgrounder attached for more summer safety tips for when you go away on vacation)*

**About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers**

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that offers rewards for anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators in the communities of Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Anonymous tips may be provided through Crime Stoppers' downloadable "P3" app for Apple and Android phones, calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477, 1-855-448-8477 (new number), online at [solvecrime.ca](http://solvecrime.ca) or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook](#) page. Find MVCS on Twitter: [@solvecrime](#) and Instagram: [@metrovancovercrimestoppers](#).

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a criminal, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Tipsters stay anonymous by using code numbers to check back later and collect their rewards.

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## BACKGROUND

### Tips to fight “Summertime Crime”

#### Close it up – lock it up

- Vacation or staycation, it doesn’t matter - close and lock all windows and doors and set security alarms. This includes garage doors. When leaving your home, use timers on lights and leave radios on to create the impression that someone is still home.
- Lock up bikes, yard tools and ladders, and lock up all vehicles parked outside.
- Don't leave a spare key outside under a mat or flowerpot like they do in the movies. Better to leave a spare key with a trusted neighbour or friend.

#### Leave your house with a “lived-in” look

- If ordering merchandise online and having it delivered, make sure the package doesn’t sit on the doorstep.
- If going away, cancel newspaper and bottled water deliveries – and ask a trusted neighbour to collect your mail, and maybe have them park their car in your driveway.
- Keep trees and shrubs trimmed near windows and entries - don’t give skulking burglars a place to hide.

#### And if you leave town this summer...

- Don't post public messages on social media that will tip off any shady characters that you're far, far away.
- Don't reveal your holiday plans to strangers, not even the cabbie or bus driver taking you to the airport.
- Anyone you do tell about your vacation plans, make it sound like you have a house sitter (even if you don’t).
- Don’t put your full home address on your luggage in case it’s stolen. A postal code is good enough.

#### CALL CRIME STOPPERS - Be prepared to report any crime by downloading the Crime Stoppers app and keeping it on your phone

- The “P3” app allows you to use your smartphone to report any crime anonymously. No need to remember numbers to call. The app also allows you to upload pictures, phone video, documents and more with your tip.