

For immediate release

Block Watch partners with Crime Stoppers; Participants encouraged to anonymously report local criminal activity

Vancouver, B.C. (December 2, 2020): The Block Watch Society of BC has embarked on a program to encourage its Block Captains and resident participants to consider calling Crime Stoppers with any reports of criminal activity.

Anyone spotting suspicious or criminal activity is always encouraged to call police first, and in the case of a crime in progress they should call 9-1-1. However, Block Watch has now partnered with Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers and has added information in its training manual and on its website about how to make an anonymous report to Crime Stoppers, should a Block Watch resident have concerns about reporting a crime directly to police.

“Neighbours in a Block Watch program might find themselves uneasy about calling police if the crime involves a neighbour for example, or someone else who might be able to identify them,” says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers. “Block Watch is now actively encouraging Block Captains and neighbours to consider an anonymous call to Crime Stoppers. Like all tips we get, any information given to Crime Stoppers by a Block Watch member will be passed on to the relevant police authority while the tipster remains totally anonymous. This way, any Block Watch neighbour spotting something doesn’t need to second guess whether or not it’s safe to report it.”

“We’re proud to be able to offer something that allows our Block Watch members to report a crime without any fear of reprisal,” says Regan Borisenko, President of the Block Watch Society of BC. “We know how effective Crime Stoppers is in successfully soliciting information anonymously that otherwise might not come to light. We still encourage our members to call police in most cases, but in situations where they might have doubts about their personal safety, our training will make sure they know they have our support if they want to call Crime Stoppers instead.”

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 **1-855-448-8477 (new number)** or **1-800-222- 8477**, online at solvecrime.ca, or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook page](#).

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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 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.

About Block Watch Society of BC

Block Watch Programs in British Columbia are under the governance of the Block Watch Society of British Columbia, an organization that provides direction, training and materials to each member in the Program. The Program involves:

- Engaging with community members to encourage residential neighbours to develop into a cohesive group for the purpose of addressing a crime or community problem in their neighbourhood through increased communication, surveillance, ownership, and guardianship of the neighbourhood.
- Training to participants on crime prevention techniques and effective reporting.
- Establishing a channel of communication between participants and the police for the sharing of information about crime in the community and encouraging the effective reporting of criminal and suspicious behavior.
- Providing program signage for residences or neighbourhoods to indicate to potential offenders that the neighbourhood is committed to vigilant surveillance of their block.
- Incorporating other community safety activities in addition to the crime prevention aspects.

Aims and Objectives of Block Watch are to reduce residential crime through the active participation of a majority of community residents. To improve police/public relations by “working together” and to establish a sense of community within neighbourhoods.

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