

**For Immediate Release**

**IT'S TIME TO THINK ABOUT KEEPING SAFE AND CRIME-FREE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

*Advice from "The Grinch" and Crime Stoppers to help keep your Christmas from being "stolen"*

**Vancouver, B.C. (December 5, 2023):** By the end of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", The Grinch had changed his mind about hating Christmas. So, it's fitting that he and his new friend little "Cindy Lou Who" teamed up with Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers today to help spread the word about how to make sure our Christmases don't get "stolen".

"It's an especially important message as 2023 ends, with concern over our personal safety on the streets at an all-time high, and growing property crime affecting local businesses all over B.C. like never before," says Linda Annis, Executive Director of Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers.



"Porch pirates, parking lot B&Es during shopping trips and online fraud are among things to watch for this holiday season," Annis says. "If you see a crime in action, call 9-1-1 or the local police. And if you have information about what nefarious deeds somebody's up to, but want to remain anonymous, call us at Crime Stoppers by phone, online, or through our "P3" smartphone app. Your anonymity is guaranteed by the Supreme Court of Canada. You'll never be questioned or called to testify."

"Street crime and things like smash-and-grab shoplifting have worsened to the point where we saw the creation this year of the Save Our Streets coalition, of which Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is one of the founding members.," Annis adds. "This growing group of community safety groups, local businesses, and organizations from around B.C, are urging immediate and coordinated government action on crime."

**THE GRINCH'S TIPS FOR A SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON**

1. **Don't leave easy pickings for porch pirates** If no one's home to watch for your delivery, ask neighbours to help watch. You can return the favour for them too.
2. **Think twice before clicking "yes" on that online shopping cart.** Does the website you're buying from, and the merch you buying, look legit? Maybe it's cheaper that it really should be? Organized retail crime costs Canadians almost \$5 billion a year, so buy from established businesses, not unknown sources. Shoplifted or stolen goods may be sold online or through flea markets, with the money often going to gangs dealing in drugs or illegal weapons.

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3. **Large boxes outside your home are flags that tell crooks that large, valuable goodies are inside to steal.** Boxes from large TVs or other expensive gifts should be stored out of sight until they're recycled.
4. **Consider registering your doorbell and home security cameras, where programs exist, to help police quickly locate recordings of neighbourhood crimes.** This voluntary program could help police solve a break in or other crime at your house, or your neighbour's.
5. **Etch it - mark your property in case it's stolen.** Ask local police to help etch your property with your driver's license number. Also photograph valuables showing their make, model and serial number.

#### **TIPS - DOWNTOWN AND AT THE MALL**

6. **Theft is getting worse, so don't leave valuables visible in your car.** Before you lock up your car to go shopping, leave nothing visible inside. Not even pocket change or empty bottles or cans. And don't fill your car with gifts and then go back into more stores. Someone may be watching what you've bought.
7. **Keep it "lit".** Find a busy, well-lit section of the parking lot and lock your gifts out of sight in the trunk.
8. **Leave your garage door opener at home or in your pocket.** A thief who takes your remote sitting from your console, and finds your address somewhere in the car, considers that an open invitation to come open your garage for a look.
9. **Watch your pockets in busy stores.** Keep purses and wallets where you can keep track of them and thwart pickpockets who look to take advantage while jostling with holiday crowds.

#### **About Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers**

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers is a non-profit society and registered charity that receives anonymous tip information about criminal activity and provides it to investigators. Anonymous tips may be provided through Crime Stoppers' downloadable "**P3**" **app for Apple and Android phones**, calling Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-8477**, online at [solvecrime.ca](https://solvecrime.ca), or by following the link on the Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers [Facebook page](#).

Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers accepts tips in 115 different languages and will pay a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to an arrest, a charge, recovery of stolen property, seizure of illegal drugs or guns, or denial of a fraudulent insurance claim. Find MVCS on X (Twitter): [@solvecrime](https://twitter.com/solvecrime), Instagram: [metrovancouvercrimestoppers](https://www.instagram.com/metrovancouvercrimestoppers) and You Tube: [@metrovancouvercrimestoppers](https://www.youtube.com/@metrovancouvercrimestoppers).

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