

CRIME PREVENTION: COMMON GOALS

Rural vandals do more than steal farm equipment



Don't let your guard down!

Rural communities have their own unique crime prevention challenges i.e. theft of crops, copper wire, fuel, timber, livestock, fertilizers and farm equipment. Rural community members may encounter dumps of chemicals from clandestine labs (Meth labs) or remains of poached animals. Be a proactive neighbour: keep an eye on your neighbour's homes or cottages, livestock and equipment. If you see a suspicious vehicle or suspicious activity, record the license plate number and activity occurring; inform your neighbours and local law enforcement about anything making you uneasy.

DOORS AND LOCKS

- Make sure external doors in your home and/or cottage have dead bolt locks, and any outbuildings are solid wood or metal and have padlocks. Always lock them.
- Use long screws to install dead bolts on doors (approximately 4 inches) and screw them into the door frame.
- Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available locks or with a broomstick or wooden dowel in the track to jam the door in case someone tries to pry it open.
- Insert screws in the upper track going into the fixed frame to prevent anyone from lifting the door from its track.
- Secure double-hung windows by sliding a bolt or nail through a hole drilled at a downward angle in each top corner of the inside sash and part way through the outside sash.
- Secure basement windows with a wooden dowel in the track to jam the window in case someone tries to pry it open or install an anti-slide device, side bolt or key lock.
- Secure gas pumps, gas tanks, storage bins, sheds and grain elevators with sturdy padlocks or deadbolts.

COTTAGES

- Cottages should always have the appearance of being occupied – this can be accomplished by using motion activated lights both indoors and outdoors.
- Consider installing a timer on the television or leaving the radio on to help deter criminals.

- Store and secure recreational equipment out of sight i.e. quads and/or trikes, boats, ski-dos, sea-dos.
- Safeguard valuable property by engraving or marking it with your driver's license number. Take photos, save them on a CD or memory stick and store off site.

OUTSIDE

- Keep your house, driveway, barns and other buildings well-lit.
- Consider installing motion activated lights on your property.
- Prune back shrubbery which may hide doors, windows or lights.
- Keep your fences in good repair.
- Secure all access roads with gates or cables stretched between posts cemented into the ground; make them visible with bright flags or streamers, reflective material or tape.
- Post "No Trespassing" or "No Hunting" signs to demonstrate you are on the alert.

PROPERTY OWNERS

- Report suspicious wood cutting, trespassing and property damage to local law enforcement.
- Keep a list of all valuables, credit cards and serial numbers in a safe place.
- Check the credentials of all door-to-door salespersons or trades persons by contacting their respective professional associations.

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EQUIPMENT

- Make Crime Prevention Week an annual reminder to do security inspections on your property.
- Engrave tools, guns, and machinery with a permanent identification number like a drivers' license number. An electric engraver should be available free charge from your local RCMP detachment.
- Keep a record of items you have marked and the serial numbers in a safe place.
- Store and lock equipment and farm machinery in a barn or garage.
- Store firearms and ammunition separately, ensuring both are locked appropriately. Firearms and ammunition must be stored in accordance with Firearms Act and regulations.
- Always lock your trucks or other vehicles when they are not in use. Never leave keys in vehicles or farm equipment.
- Don't leave tools in the open back of a pick up truck or in an unsecured truck bed toolbox.
- If machines must be left out for long periods of time, disable them by removing the rotor, distributor or battery
- Don't leave major equipment in a field overnight or in remote areas away from home; lock them in a barn or shed or park them where they can be seen from your home or a neighbour's home.
- Immediately report to law enforcement any missing chemicals, equipment, fuel, medicines or fertilizers.

LIVESTOCK

- Tattoo, micro-chip or brand all livestock. Ear tags or neck chains can be removed.
- Mark young stock soon after birth and take regular counts of all livestock.

CROPS

- Store harvested crops in protected and locked locations.
- Consider marking grain, hay or other crops with non-toxic confetti imprinted with your special code number to be removed by storage or processing facilities.
- Keep storage areas neat and well-organized so any theft will be noticed immediately.
- Check employee references before they start work. Inform them about all your crime prevention measures and ensure they adhere to them.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- When you are away on business or vacation, stop the delivery of your mail or ask a neighbour to pick it up.
- Have your neighbours routinely check your property and return the favor when they leave on trips.
- Join an Alberta Rural Crime Watch program: for more information please call (780) 422-0922 or visit their website at www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca.

What do we have in common? For more on our common goal of rural crime prevention, visit www.crimeprevention.gov.ab.ca