

# RESIDENTIAL SECURITY

Security is **your** responsibility

CRIME PREVENTION

IT'S IN YOUR  
NEIGHBOURHOOD

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## RESIDENTIAL SECURITY

**Thieves and vandals prey on people who don't take preventative measures. Are you doing what you can to protect your family, your home and your property?**

## CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

**Landscaping and architectural design can incorporate simple and inexpensive concepts to improve security in your home and community.**

At home, shrubs and trees should not create blind spots or hiding spots on your property. Walkways and landscaping should direct visitors to the proper entrance and away from private areas. Exterior doors should be visible from the street or by neighbours. Sidewalks, doorways and all areas of the yard should be well lit.

In communities, open green spaces and recreational areas should be well lit and visible from nearby homes. Lot, street and house designs should encourage interaction between neighbours, which can deter criminal activity.

### DOORS

All exterior doors should be of solid-core construction, 4.5 cm thick with a 180° peephole. Door frames should also be of solid construction and have a proper security strike plate. Avoid hollow-core and glass doors. You should never open the door unless you know who is on the outside.

### GLASS PANELS

If your home has a window within one metre of an exterior door lock, replace the glass in the window with a tough, clear, unbreakable plastic that's mar-resistant, or coat it with a clear, protective, unbreakable coating.

### WINDOWS

Windows pose a definite threat to home security. Install high-quality backup locks on all your windows if they can be pried open easily. There are several types of commercial window locks available to homeowners. Ask a reputable home security supplier which lock is suitable for your needs.

Another reinforcement method is "pinning." Drill a 0.5 cm hole through the inside window frame and into the outside frame. Secure the window by placing a commercial pin or a large nail through the hole. Double-hung windows and sliding aluminum windows can also be pinned.

Basement windows are a common entry point for burglars. Windows hidden by bushes or trees give intruders an ideal place to work. Replace basement windows with a tough, clear, unbreakable plastic that's mar-resistant, or install decorative security bars over glass windows. (Check the building codes in your area to ensure your security bars comply.) Bar windows from the inside and ensure they open easily in case of emergency.

Windows that are seldom used should be permanently secured. Remove any bushes, trees or other obstructions (e.g. sheds) that hide windows from view.



## LOCKS

A good lock is very important. The popular key-in-the-knob locks are not very effective. Install a 2.5 cm deadbolt lock on all exterior doors.

Patio doors are popular targets for burglars and thieves, as many of them can be lifted out of their tracks and removed. To prevent this, install metal screws in the door's upper track. These screws will fill the space above the door, preventing it from clearing the lower track. Patio doors can also be pinned like windows or locked with a commercial lock.

## FIREARMS

If you have firearms and/or ammunition, ensure that they are stored or are being displayed so they meet the regulations of the Firearms Act. **For further information, call 1-800-731-4000.**

## COMPUTERS

Computers should be placed away from windows and you should look into the numerous devices available for protecting your CPU and printer. These can be secured with tamper resistant machine screws to protect the memory boards.

## SAFE ROOM

You may want to identify a safe room in your home where family members can go if an intruder enters while you are home. The room should have a locking device, a phone and (if on the second level) an escape ladder that hooks over the window sill and drops to a safe distance from the ground.

## TELEPHONE SAFETY

Never give your name, number or address to a caller you don't know, and report any harassing or threatening calls to the police. To prevent your name and number from being displayed on outgoing calls, and to prevent the use of call return to your number, have the phone company permanently block this information, or use a temporary block by pressing \*67 before the number (dial 1167 on a rotary phone). If you receive a harassing or threatening call you can press \*57 immediately after hanging up to trace the call. Contact your phone company for more information on telephone security options.

## OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

**Burglars seldom steal valuable merchandise for personal use; they steal items that can be transported and sold easily. Operation Identification discourages burglars before they attempt to break into your home.**

### What you can do:

■ Join Operation Identification through your local police service or volunteer in a crime prevention program like Block Watch, Neighbourhood Watch or Rural Crime Watch.

■ Identify all your valuable property with your driver's license number by using an engraver, a permanent marker or an invisible ink pen. If you don't have a driver's licence, similar identification can be issued where driver's licences are sold. (Do not use your social insurance number.) Small items and jewelry can be photographed beside a clearly marked ruler. Also, the contents of the house can be videotaped and the tape stored in a safety deposit box.

■ Advertise the fact that all property in your home is marked for identification by placing Operation Identification decals (available from police services) on your entrance doors and windows.

■ Record the serial numbers and descriptions of all your valuable property.

#### ■ Tack I.D.

Equestrians – don't forget to identify your saddle and other tack. Stamp all tack with your driver's licence number. On a western saddle, stamp the gullet area directly under the horn, while English saddles can be permanently marked by stamping the number on the inside of the fender area. Other tack, such as harnesses and bridles, should be marked on the inside of each piece that can be disassembled. To permanently mark your leather tack, just dampen the leather with a wet cloth and stamp the number into the leather with a metal stamp. (Metal stamping kits cost approximately \$10.00 in most hardware stores.) For further information, contact your local RCMP, RCMP Livestock Investigation Section or Rural Crime Watch Association.

#### RECOVERY OF STOLEN PROPERTY

Identifiable stolen property can now be recorded on CPIC (a nationwide police database). CPIC allows Alberta's police services to readily identify (at any time of day) the owner of marked property that is recovered.

#### OTHER SECURITY OPTIONS

If you keep large amounts of money or expensive jewelry at home you should invest in a good quality safe. Other forms of security to keep in mind are alarmed security systems or roll-shutters for windows and doors.

#### GARAGE AND VEHICLE PROTECTION

Garages are another popular target for burglars. Keep curtains over your garage windows so thieves can't window shop or check to see if your car is there. Install inward swinging, solid-core doors with deadbolts on your attached garage door. Use a good padlock for the garage door and keep it locked, even when you are home. If you have an automatic garage door opener, customize your remote to ensure that you are the only one who can open your garage.

**Most vehicle thefts are the result of owner carelessness. To avoid vehicle thefts, follow these simple rules:**

■ Close the windows, lock the doors and never leave keys inside the vehicle.

■ Place valuables in the trunk; do not leave credit cards in your car.

■ Mark your vehicle's stereo equipment with your licence number and keep a record of all vehicle serial numbers.

■ Never hide a spare key under the carpeting or over the sun visor.

■ Park your car in well-lit areas.

■ Do not leave your car unattended with luggage, skis or bikes on the roof rack.

■ Do not mark your keys with your name and address.

■ Keep your garage door opener with you. A stolen car can lead to a home break-in.

■ If you are required to leave a key with a parking attendant, leave only your ignition key.

- Remove all documents (insurance, licence, etc.) from the car when you are not driving. This identification could be stolen and used in other crimes (fraud, home burglary).

#### **If your vehicle is stolen ...**

- Notify the police immediately and provide the following information: vehicle identification and licence number, year, make, colour and distinguishing marks (dents, accessories, etc.).

### **GOING AWAY?**

#### **Use these tips to protect your home and belongings when you are not there:**

- Tell only those people who need to know that you are going away.

- Have a trusted person house sit for you, or hire a reliable house-sitting service.

- Cancel home deliveries of milk and newspapers and do not leave notes for others. Have the post office hold or forward your mail and ask a neighbour to collect "junk mail."

- Arrange for someone to perform lawn and garden maintenance so your home will look lived in.

- Have a neighbour arrange drapes and blinds occasionally.

- Purchase timers for radios, TVs and exterior and interior lights.

- Turn down the telephone bell as an unanswered telephone usually indicates an empty house.

- Ask your neighbours to inform the police immediately if they notice anything unusual or suspicious around your home. They should record the licence plates of questionable vehicles.

- Do not leave a message on your machine telling callers you are away.

#### **Before you leave...**

- Lock all tools, barbecues and ladders out of sight.

- Set and test all timing devices.

- Lock and check all doors and windows.

- Disconnect the garage door opener.

#### **If a burglary has occurred during your absence...**

- Do not enter the house in case the intruder is still there. Use a neighbour's phone to call the police immediately!

- Do not touch anything ... wait for police to arrive.

- Have a record of the serial numbers of missing items. Anything without a serial number should be marked with your driver's licence number. This increases your chances of having missing property returned to you.



## HOME SECURITY CHECKLIST

**Complete this security check on your own residence to find out if your home may be vulnerable to thieves. This survey can also help you evaluate the security risks of a home you plan to purchase or rent.**

### DOORS

- ☐ Doors have 180° peepholes.
- ☐ Inside locks are at least one metre from glass.
- ☐ Exterior doors are solid-core.
- ☐ Exterior doors have 2.5 cm deadbolts.
- ☐ Exterior door hinge pins are non-removable.
- ☐ Door jambs are securely fastened.
- ☐ Strike plates are secured to door jambs with 6.35 cm (2.5 ") screws.
- ☐ Deadbolts extend sufficiently into strike plates.
- ☐ Locks have been changed or re-keyed since you have moved in.

### WINDOWS

- ☐ Double-hung windows are securely pinned.
- ☐ Metal windows and basement windows have auxiliary locks.
- ☐ Basement windows have auxiliary locks.
- ☐ Curtains cover windows completely.
- ☐ Window air conditioners are secured from inside.

### GARAGE

- ☐ Garage door closes tightly.
- ☐ Overhead garage door has quality lock.
- ☐ Doors are locked and closed when not in use.
- ☐ Remote garage door opener is customized for your garage door.
- ☐ Keys are removed from vehicle while it's in the garage.
- ☐ Garage light can be turned on from inside the house.

### EXTERIORS

- ☐ Shrubs are cut below window level.
- ☐ Tree limbs are cut above window level.
- ☐ Residence number is visible from the street, and at night.
- ☐ All entrances to the house and garage are well lit.
- ☐ Bicycles, lawn mowers, ladders, etc. are kept inside.
- ☐ You know your neighbours and watch out for each other's property, or you belong to a Neighbourhood Watch program.

### VACATIONS

- ☐ You have stopped all deliveries.
- ☐ You have left shades and blinds in their normal positions.
- ☐ You have notified your neighbours.
- ☐ You have set timers on lights and radios.

- ☐ Someone is taking care of your yard.
- ☐ Your mail is being held or picked up.

#### ADDITIONAL CHECKS

- ☐ You keep most of your cash in the bank.
- ☐ You keep a list of all valuable property, credit cards and serial numbers in a safe place.
- ☐ Valuable property is engraved with your driver's licence number.

Other notes:

## CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS

**The best way to keep crime out of our neighbourhoods is to keep ourselves involved in crime prevention. Get to know your neighbours and discuss an effective crime prevention strategy for your community.**

**If something needs doing, do it! If your neighbour is away and you see an obvious invitation to a burglar, do what you can to help: remove mail and papers and help with some minimal lawn and yard maintenance.**

If you witness a crime, phone the police. Remain on the line until a police vehicle arrives so you can direct the officers to the exact location and individuals involved in the offence. Don't assume that someone else has called the police ... three calls received are better than no calls at all.

Join a crime prevention organization such as the Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association (ACCPA), Neighbourhood Watch, Block Watch, Rural Crime Watch, Citizens on Patrol, Block Parent<sup>®</sup>, or the Heads Up Fraud Prevention Association's Wise Owls (a seniors' crime prevention program). Contact the crime prevention coordinator in your local police service for more information on programs in your area.



**Contact your local police service for  
further information.**

**Your police service phone number is:**

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