Crime Prevention in Changing Times

Crime Prevention Week - November 1st to 7th, 2017

Crime Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility

Seniors Safety

Statistics show Seniors are the least victimized group for most crimes, however, many Seniors list "fear of crime" as one of their biggest concerns.

When older adults are victimized the consequences are often more severe. Many Seniors live on a fixed income, so the loss of money or property is difficult to replace. Also as people get older their bodies take longer to recover from injury.

Protecting your Home

- Keep doors locked at all times. Use your peephole to see who is at the door. If you do not recognize the individual, do not open the door. Verify the identity of service or maintenance personnel by having them show their identification – if unsure, contact the company to verify before opening the door.
- Ensure exterior doors are made of solid wood or metal and the door frame is reinforced or made of metal.
- Installing security film or Plexiglas on the inside of windows increases the difficulty of breaking the glass.
- Install motion-activated lights. Exterior motion-activated lights can alert you to suspicious individuals outside your home at night. Interior motion-activated lights installed in hallways or stairwells allow for illumination if you need to get up during the night.

Personal Safety

- Walk with your head up high and with a sense of purpose, to give yourself the appearance of not being vulnerable. If you feel threatened, go to the closest business or public space to request assistance.
- Carry only the essentials in your purse. Carry your purse close to your body. Although wearing the strap across your body makes it harder for an attacker to take the purse, if you are attacked it can increase the likelihood of injury.
- Carry keys and identification documents in your pocket.
- Do not carry large amounts of money. Speak with your bank about options for having cheques directly deposited and for bills to be direct from your account.
- Cell phones can come in handy during emergencies. Carry cell phones in your pocket to ensure you have access if your purse is stolen.

Identity Theft, Scams and Frauds

- Never provide personal information (such as birthdate, social insurance number, and banking information) over the phone, via email, social media or over the Internet, unless you have initiated the transaction. Identity thieves may use phony offers or pose as representatives of financial institutions, Internet service providers or even government agencies to trick you into revealing identifying information.
- Shred or destroy documents with personal information or receipts containing credit/debit card information. Cut up expired and unused credit and debit cards, the card may have expired but the number may still be valid and could be used to make purchases.
- Pay close attention to your financial and credit card statements. Report any discrepancies on your statements to your financial institution right away.
- Guard your computer and its information. Install fire-wall, anti-virus, anti-spyware and security software, and keep it up to date. Always create passwords that include a combination of letters (upper and lower case), numbers, and symbols – do not use automatic login features that save your username and password.
- Do not reply to, open attachments, or click on links in unsolicited emails. Spam and phishing emails are often a source of scams, viruses and offensive content. Delete suspicious emails.
- Be cautious of anyone contacting you for goods or services. Do not let yourself be pressured into purchasing over the phone or computer, always ask for a number to call back to validate who they are. Never provide personal or payment information to an unknow caller.
- Be skeptical of unsolicited offers - Do not send money up front in order to claim prizes. Do not provide personal information, banking or credit card information over the phone to unsolicited callers.

Crime Prevention in Changing Times

Crime Prevention Week - November 1st to 7th, 2017

Crime Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility

Safety Tips to Maintain Independence

- Maintain good health and keep a healthy diet. Have an active social life, try to keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water. This cuts down on health risks and injuries.
- Build a close circle of friends. Isolation can contribute to poor mental health and cognitive decline. Maintaining a close social network can support an individual's wellbeing and offer a network for individuals to call upon if assistance is needed.
- Create a list of emergency contacts and post it near the telephone. The list should include medical professionals, family members, and friends.
- Ensure a sufficient supply of medication is available. Running out of medication can be life threatening.
- Keep a list of medications, allergies and personal information in your wallet or purse: If you have a specific medical condition, wear a medical Alert bracelet. This information is valuable to emergency medical personnel when they are responding to a medical emergency, especially if you are unconscious or unable to communicate.
- Build or purchase an emergency kit to be used in the event of a natural disaster. Include survival supplies like dried food, blankets, bottled water, flashlights, matches, candles, and medical supplies. Build a 'Grab-&Go' bag with essential survival supplies, if you need to evacuate your home. Visit www. gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC for more information.
- Keep your home in good repair to prevent dangerous hazards that could cause injury or become a health and safety risk. Install handholds and bars in bathrooms and hallways to prevent falls and assist with mobility.
- Consider an emergency alert system. Some alarm companies offer medical alert systems for seniors, allowing them to summon assistance in the event of a fall or accident, by pressing a button worn on a neck lanyard.

Additional Resources

BCCPA Seniors Safety and Crime Prevention Booklet: Provides personal safety and crime prevention information, along with links to resources for older adults. $2.00/booklet, contact BCCPA at 604-501-9222 or info@bccpa.org to order.

Better Business Bureau: Maintains a directory of BBB accredited businesses to assist consumers in identifying trustworthy businesses and charities. Provides tips to assist consumers in making purchasing decisions and assists consumers in marketplace related complaints. For a BBB location nearest you visit: www.bbb.org

***Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre*:** The central agency in Canada that collects information on all fraud related matters. Provides information on the various frauds and scams circulating, along with tips for protecting oneself from becoming a victim of fraud. www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca

***Seniors First BC (formerly BC Center for Elder & Advocacy Support - BCCEAS)*:** Works to prevent elder abuse and provides assistance and support to older adults that are, or may be, abused and those whose rights have been violated. 604-688-1927 or www.seniorsfirstbc.ca

Seniors Abuse & Information Line (SAIL): a safe and confidential place for older adults and those who care about them to talk to someone about situations where they feel they are being abused or mistreated, or to receive information about abuse prevention. 604-437-1940 or 1-866-437-1940 (toll free)

SeniorsBC.ca: a website to find resources and information for older adults, families and caregivers. www.SeniorsBC.ca

VictimLink BC: Free and confidential services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over 110 languages, providing crisis and referral information. 1-800-563-0808 or www.victimlinkbc.ca

In Partnership with:

BRITISH COLUMBIA CRIME PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

www.bccpa.org

BANK OF CANADA
BANQUE DU CANADA

IBC | Insurance Bureau of Canada

BC Municipal Police Forces
RCMP "E" Division
Public Safety Canada
Transit Police

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Supported by the Province of British Columbia