



Surrey RCMP

# BLOCK WATCH

## PROGRAM MANUAL



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada





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# What is Block Watch?

## Notes

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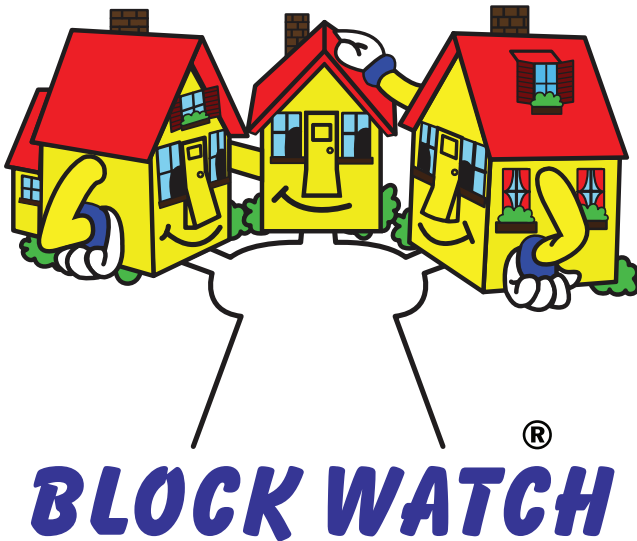
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**Block Watch** is a program designed to help neighbours watch out for each other. It aims to get citizens involved in discouraging and preventing crime at the local level.

The Block Watch program was specifically developed to help reduce residential break-ins and thefts from vehicles, and to provide a greater awareness to neighbours on how to be on the alert for suspicious activities in their communities.

The ultimate success of Block Watch depends largely on a commitment to cooperate between area residents and the police — and, more importantly, between residents themselves.

Block Watch has been operating successfully in Surrey since 1986. It is administered in partnership by Surrey RCMP and the City of Surrey through our Community Programs Coordinators.

## How it Works

By simply getting to know the neighbours around you, you'll be able to recognize someone or something that's suspicious. A Block Watch can be set up in a residential area, apartment complex, townhouse complex, or mobile home group. When neighbours work together, they can combat crime in their area in the most effective way – before it starts. Block Watch encourages active participation in crime prevention.

## Notes

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## Benefits to You

Why should I join? Does Block Watch really make a difference? The core benefits of Block Watch are advocacy, communication, empowerment, and placemaking.

CORE BENEFITS			
<p><b>ADVOCACY</b></p> <p>Block Watch gives you an advocate at your local community police office.</p>	<p><b>EMPOWERMENT</b></p> <p>Block Watch gives you the tools and information you need to take proactive steps to reduce crime in your neighbourhood.</p>	<p><b>COMMUNICATION</b></p> <p>Block Watch establishes communication between neighbours for a common purpose - the safety of your neighbourhood.</p>	<p><b>PLACEMAKING</b></p> <p>Block Watch allows you to take ownership of your neighbourhood and create a safe, resilient community.</p>



# Block Watch Advantages

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- Learn how to make your home a less inviting target for thieves.
- Learn how to mark and engrave your valuables.
- Learn how to recognize and report suspicious activity in your neighbourhood.
- Increase your personal safety.
- Learn how to prevent auto crime.
- Receive bulletins and updates from your Community Programs Coordinator regarding crime stats, community events and local issues in your neighborhood.
- Possibly receive an insurance discount from your home insurance carrier (ask your insurance provider for more information)

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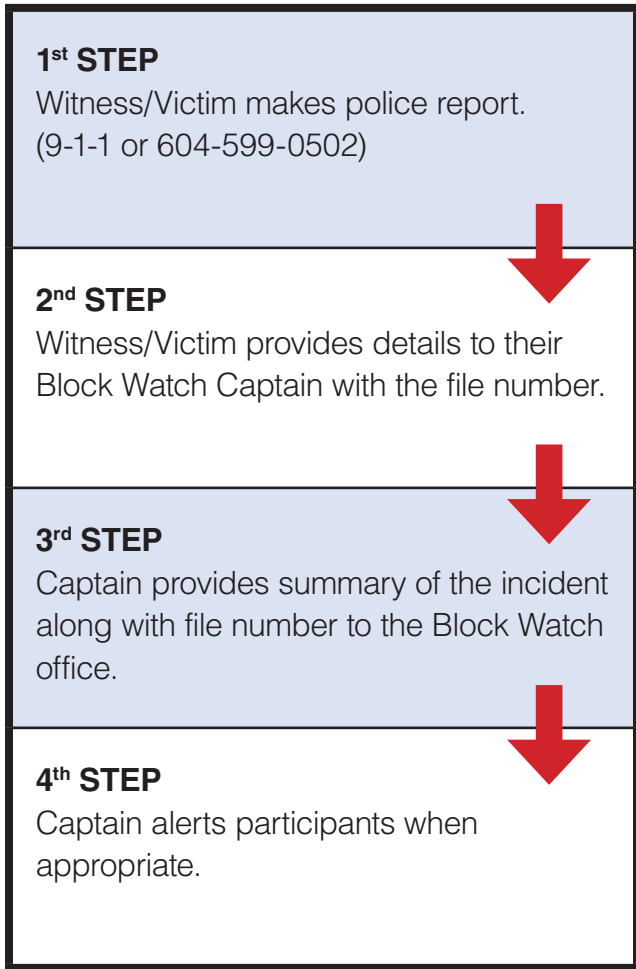
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# Communication Process

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The Block Watch communication process is quite simple.



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# Steps to Establishing a Block Watch

1. Submit your Block Watch Application Form to become a captain or co-captain
2. Pass a suitability check
3. Attend a training session
4. Invite neighbours to join your Block Watch
5. Sign up Block Watch participants
6. Set up communication process/ email distribution list
7. Submit your Participant List to the Community Programs Coordinator
8. Obtain and post a Block Watch sign for your neighbourhood
9. Fan out information to your participants
10. Hand out resources and Block Watch decals
11. Plan a meeting or gathering

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## Participant List

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Block Watch Captains/Co-Captains are required to submit a participant list to the Community Programs Coordinator at the Surrey RCMP. The minimum information required on the Block Watch participant list is the name and a valid address for each person signed up in the Block Watch group.

Captains/Co-Captains can create a more detailed list for themselves which includes the name, address, phone number and email of the participants in their Block Watch group. The purpose of this information will be to allow for information sharing amongst your Block Watch group. Template participant lists will be provided to Captains/Co-Captains.

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# Captain & Co-Captain Responsibilities

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The responsibilities of being a Captain and Co-Captain of a Block Watch will not require too much time.

- Reading, forwarding and responding to emails.
- Encourage communication and getting to know each other. It can be as simple as saying hello!
- Being an advocate for police and the Block Watch program.
- Observing and reporting suspicious activity to the police.
- Being alert and keeping an eye out for others.
- Updating a participant list (at least every two years).
- Supplying residents with crime prevention information

# Participant Responsibilities

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- Observe and report suspicious activity to police.
- Keep an eye out for your neighbours.
- Inform Captain/ Co-Captain regarding any incidents/ suspicious activity taking place after you have reported it to police.

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# Meetings & Gatherings

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We encourage all Block Watch groups to meet at least once a year to help create a sense of community and to get to know their neighbors. These meetings can also be used to update your participant list and to share crime prevention tools and resources.

## Tips for having a successful gathering:

- Plan well in advance
- Invite your Community Programs Coordinator
- Obtain grant funds wherever possible
- Host the meeting close by:
  - o Strata complexes can often utilize amenities rooms
  - o Residences can utilize a neighbour's house or yard.
  - o Use an RCMP board room
  - o Use a multi-purpose room at a City of Surrey Recreation Centre

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## Grants and Funding

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The following grants are available throughout the year for your Block Parties:

Neighbourhood Enhancement Grant – City of Surrey [www.surrey.ca/Community](http://www.surrey.ca/Community)

Block Watch Society of BC Grant <https://blockwatch.com/awards>

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# When to Contact Your Community Programs Coordinator

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Stay in contact with your Community Programs Coordinator. Contact them for any of the following:

- Questions about neighbourhood concerns or crime trends?
- Booking a meeting
- Invitation to an annual gathering
- Block Watch sign replacement or installation
- Requesting resources, brochures or door/window decals
- Updated participant list
- Change of Captain/Co-Captain
- General inquiries

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## Social Media Tips

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### Social Media Do's

- Welcome new neighbours
- Create a sense of community
- Promote neighbourhood clean ups
- Encourage neighbourhood gatherings
- Advertise community gardens
- Post City of Surrey / RCMP Events
- Share crime trend awareness
- Promote school events
- Promote Block Watch

### Social Media Don'ts

- Make unfounded allegations or assumptions
- Share your opinions about others (defamation)
- Treat rumor/hearsay as fact
- Release names before charges are laid
- Post videos and pictures instead of calling the police
- Share information on a police file

## Stay Safe on Social Media


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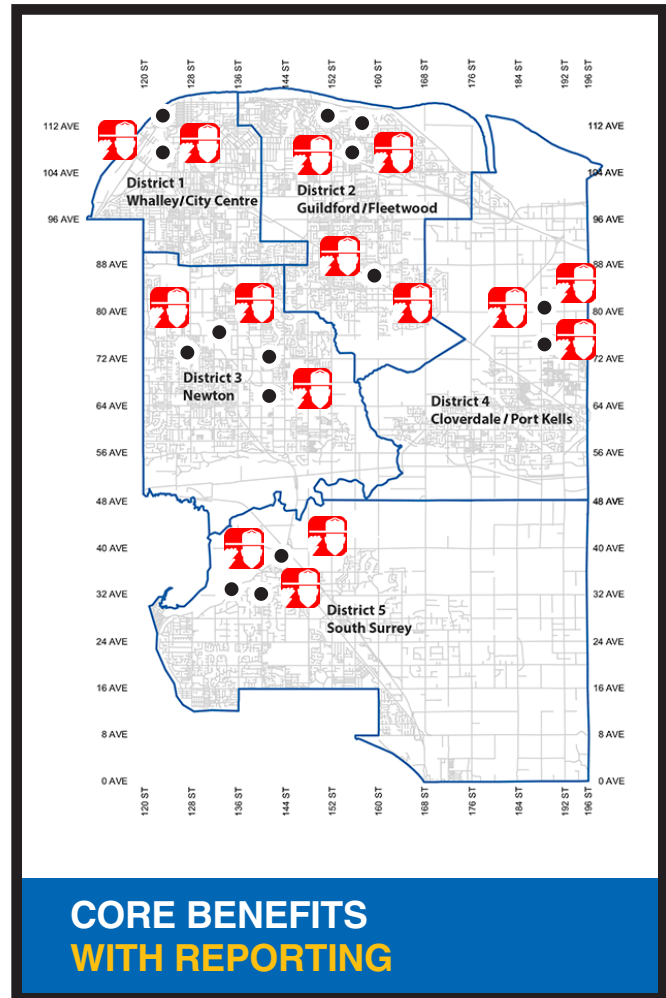
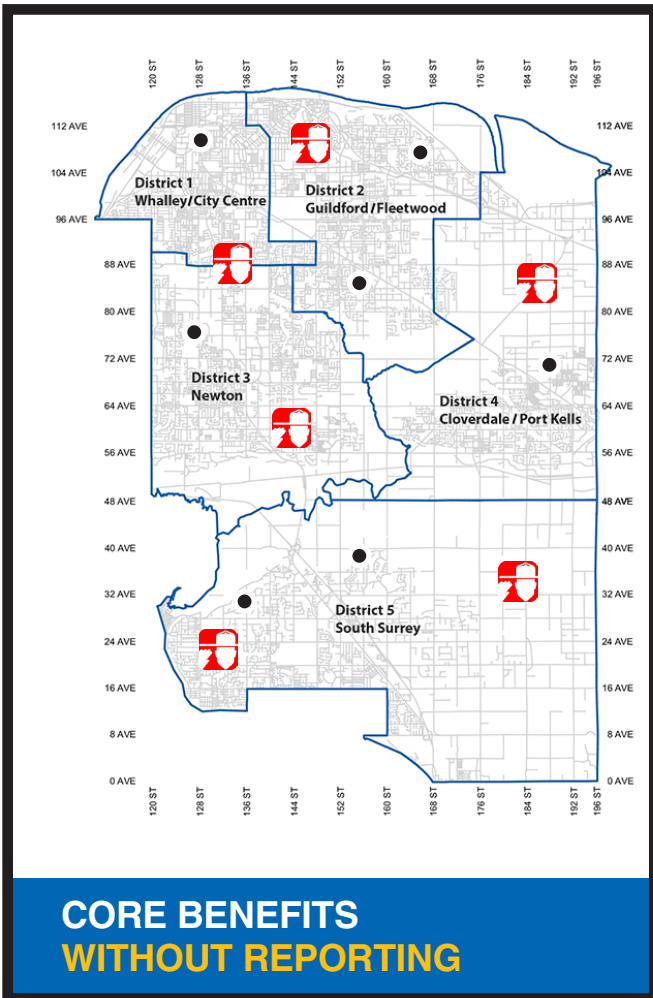
- Avoid geotagging photos: Most smartphones automatically attach the exact location where a photo was taken – and when you share it online, the geotag can give away your address or let people know that you're on vacation, which could make your home a target for break-ins. Check the manual of your device for instructions on how to turn off geotagging.
- Be careful with what you post online: Once your pictures, comments and personal information are posted on the internet, you have no control over where they may end up.
- Use a complex password: When registering for social networking accounts, use a password that would be difficult to guess – mix upper and lowercase characters and numbers, and refrain from using simple words.
- Don't become a fraud victim: Divulging too much personal information on social networking sites can make you a victim of identity theft, credit/mortgage fraud, online predators, extortion etc.

**For more information, please visit [Surrey RCMP website](#) for more information about online safety.**

# Importance of Incident Reporting

Every incident reported to the Surrey RCMP is analyzed and assessed to identify crime trends and public safety issues. When you call police you will be connected with a telecommunications call taker. Call takers will ask a series of questions required to create a police file and determine if police attendance is required. Ultimately calls for service determine where police resources are deployed. These areas of high criminal activity are referred to as “hot spots”.

	<b>IMPORTANT</b>
	These maps are not a true representation of crime in the City of Surrey. They are meant to be an example.





# When to Call 9-1-1

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## What is considered a policing emergency?

When there is an immediate threat to person or property or when there is a crime in progress.

### Immediate threat

Ex. Weapon

### Suspicious circumstance indicating immediate criminal act

Ex. Prowler

### Crime in Progress

Ex. Assault in Progress or Impaired Driving

### Serious Crime just occurred

Ex. Robbery

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# When to Call Non-Emergency

## Notes

**When immediate action is not required**

Surrey RCMP Non-Emergency:  
604-599-0502

**Crime with No Suspect**

Ex. Licence plate theft

**Crime with a Time Delay or No Suspect at scene**

Ex. Scam, fraud, or break & enter

**Follow-Up on a File**

Ex. Request an update on your stolen property

**Suspicious Circumstance (non-emergency) incident in progress or ongoing criminal activity**

Ex. Noisy party or drug use

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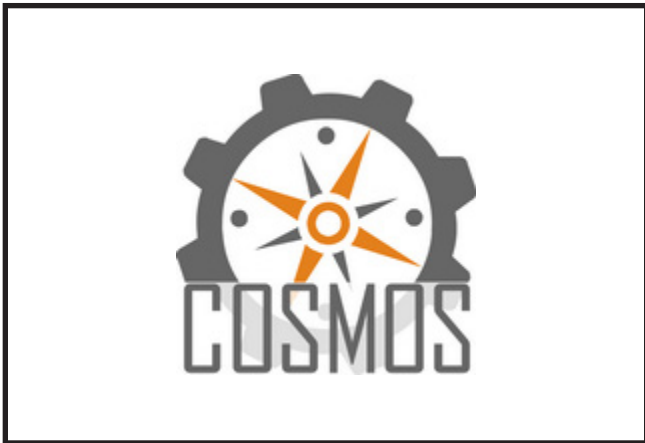
## Block Watch FAQ's

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1. **As a member of a Block Watch am I required to conduct patrols in my neighbourhood?**  
No. The Block Watch program does not promote that you conduct any sort of patrol in your neighbourhood. What participants are encouraged to do is observe and report any suspicious activity to the Police by calling the non-emergency reports line 604-599-0502 or 911 for crimes in progress.
2. **As a member of Block Watch am I required to vacation house-sit?**  
No. The Block Watch program does not require you to vacation house-sit. It is a good idea to let your trustworthy neighbours know if you are going to be out of town for a few days so that they can be on the lookout for any suspicious activity which they can report to the Police.
3. **Why do participants have to provide their name, address, email, phone number to the Captain/ Co-Captain?**  
This information is captured by the Captain/Co-Captain in your area so that they can contact you in the event that an incident occurs in your neighbourhood. The only information required to be submitted to the Surrey RCMP Community Programs Coordinator is the participant address and name so that should a participant ask their home insurance provider for an insurance discount, we can verify that the participant is part of a Block Watch group.
4. **Are members of Block Watch required to make police reports on behalf of others?**  
No, as a member of the Block Watch program you are not required to report incidents to the Police on behalf of others. Fact: Only witnesses or victims are able to call the Police themselves. Our call takers cannot take third party reports.
5. **Is there a certain number of houses required to establish a Block Watch?**  
No, there is no minimum or maximum for the number of homes that can participate in a Block Watch. We encourage Captains and Co-Captains to take on as much as they feel they can handle. We have groups ranging from 10 homes to 100 homes. Reminder: It's all about knowing your neighbors so keep it in close proximity.
6. **What is the importance of incident reporting?**  
Every incident reported to the Surrey RCMP is analyzed and assessed to identify crime trends and public safety issues. When you call police you will be connected with a telecommunications operator. Operators will ask a series of questions required to create a police file to determine the priority of the call and if police attendance is required. If it's not being reported, it's not happening! If Police attendance is not required, a file number is still created to document that an incident has occurred. All information reported is documented and used in determining police resourcing.

## Ways to Connect with Police / City of Surrey

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Use **COSMOS** mapping system, the City of Surrey's Online any property in Surrey or get a Property Report, which you can use to find assessment values, and maps on a property by address. Explore over 200 layers of information, annotate your own maps or search for underground infrastructure near your property. COSMOS now supports all modern browsers. For more information on COSMOS visit:

[www.cosmos.surrey.ca](http://www.cosmos.surrey.ca)



**Project IRIS** (Integrated Resources for Investigation and Safety) is a voluntary program that allows residents and businesses to register their closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras in a secure, online database that is managed by the City of Surrey. Project IRIS is a partnership between the City of Surrey, businesses, police and the community and is part of the Public Safety Strategy. For more information on Project IRIS visit:

<https://my.surrey.ca/iris-camera-registry>





The **Surrey RCMP App** allows residents and businesses to stay engaged and up to date with their local police. This app provides on the go notifications and information on crime, news, events, appeals for assistance, and crime prevention. Citizens will also have easy access to crime reporting options, detachment contact information, social media, and links to public safety information.

For more information visit:

[www.surrey.rcmp.ca](http://www.surrey.rcmp.ca)



**Text Transit Police 87-77-77**, or use the **SeeSay** app to notify Transit Police of non-emergency issues:

- You have witnessed an incident or observed suspicious behaviour
- There is an issue on transit that makes you feel uncomfortable
- Or if you have other transit police-related concerns

In an emergency, always call 9-1-1.

For more information on Transit Police visit

[www.transitpolice.ca](http://www.transitpolice.ca)



Submit your service request to the City of Surrey with the **MySurrey App** from your iPhone, Android, or Blackberry smartphone. Report graffiti, potholes, litter, and more. Report a non-emergency problem by submitting your service request. For example, you can report dumping, street issues, or park issues for the City to fix.

For more information about the Report a Problem App visit [www.surrey.ca](http://www.surrey.ca) – Stay in touch with your local Mounties. Subscribe to **Surrey RCMP e-newsletters** to receive information via email on:

- News Releases
- Events
- Crime Statistics & Maps
- Officer in Charge Messages

Subscribe at [www.surrey.ca/enews](http://www.surrey.ca/enews)



**Crime Stoppers** – Do you know something that you want to report anonymously?

**Contact Crime Stoppers:**

1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

For more information on how to sign up visit [www.crimestoppers.ca](http://www.crimestoppers.ca)





## Surrey RCMP Contact Information

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**Non-Emergency reporting line:**

604-599-0502

**Police, Fire or Ambulance Emergency:**

9-1-1

**Parent Helpline:**

604-599-7800

**Block Watch:**

604-599-7601

**Main Detachment**

14355 57th Avenue, Surrey BC, V3X 1A9

## City of Surrey Contact Information

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**City Hall General Inquiries:**

604-591-4011

**City Emergency Issues**

(missing stop signs and broken water mains):

604-591-4152

**Broken Traffic Signal or Streetlight:**

604-591-4338

**Waste Collection Hotline:** 604-590-7289

**Bylaw & Animal Control:** 604-591-4370

**Parking Complaints:** 604-591-4352

**Surrey Fire:** 604-543-6700





# Code of Conduct

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- Never give the public the impression that he/she is a police officer. It is an offence to impersonate a police officer.
- Attend training sessions when able/required to do so.
- Not participate in any criminal activity.
- Be reliable and have integrity.
- Never abuse or misuse any property belonging to the RCMP or City of Surrey.
- Never accept any gifts or gratuities on behalf of the RCMP or City of Surrey without the express permission of the Community Programs Coordinator.
- Not use offensive language within the office or while in public conducting volunteer duties.
- Not demonstrate any racial or prejudicial behavior, either verbal or by action(s).
- Not conduct personal business while performing Block Watch duties.
- Not permit a friend, acquaintance, media representative, family member, etc., to accompany you while on Block Watch duties without permission from your Community Programs Coordinator.
- Not distribute any political or religious pamphlets within the office or while in public performing Block Watch duties.
- Report any negative contact/altercation with law enforcement to your Community Programs Coordinator.
- Treat others with respect.
- Send communication to Block Watch participants in a timely manner.
- Update and submit a participant list to the Community Programs Coordinator every two years.









## Block Watch Contact Information

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To start or join a Block Watch please call  
the Block Watch General Contact Number:

**604-599-7601**

**District 1 - City Centre/Whalley**  
[surreyblockwatch1@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:surreyblockwatch1@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

**District 2 - Guildford/Fleetwood**  
[surreyblockwatch2@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:surreyblockwatch2@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

**District 3 - Newton**  
[surreyblockwatch3@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:surreyblockwatch3@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

**District 4 - Cloverdale/Port Kells**  
[surreyblockwatch4@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:surreyblockwatch4@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)

**District 5 - South Surrey**  
[surreyblockwatch5@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:surreyblockwatch5@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)



Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
Gendarmerie royale du Canada

