

FALL/WINTER 2025

Block Watch Beat

A Newsletter for Block Watch Community Safety

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DIGITAL SAFETY 101 - QUICK TIPS

Scammers are getting smarter and more sophisticated with their techniques. Protect yourself and your loved ones by learning how to spot, avoid, and report the most common digital threats.

Common Digital Threats

Public Wi-Fi Risks

Hackers can spy on your connection or redirect you to fake websites.

TIP: Never shop or bank on public Wi-Fi.



QR Code Scams

Fake codes on posters, menus, or parking machines can link to malware or fraudulent websites.

TIP: Always double-check the website address before entering personal information or payment details.

PinPad Skimmers

Illegal devices secretly attached to card readers (like ATMs, gas pumps, or payment terminals).

TIP: Tug the card slot, cover keypad, and/or use tap payments.



Fake Websites

Look for spelling errors or unusual URLs for example:



www.google.com



www.googel.com



Smart Safety Habits

Remember to slow down as scammers thrive on speed. Before you click, tap, or pay, always double-check.

Stay Alert → Stay Safe

- **Email Safety:** Did you know you can make your email easier to organize without creating a new email account? Many email services allow you to use "plus addressing." For example: yourname+alias@gmail.com goes to the same inbox as yourname@gmail.com.



This is a simple way to keep your personal emails separate from work, shopping or subscriptions. To learn more, check out: [**How to enable plus addressing**](#)

- **RFID-blocking Wallets:** Specially designed wallets that protect your credit cards, debit cards, and IDs from unauthorized scanning using RFID technology. The wallets protect against passive skimming, not phishing, PIN theft, or advanced relay attacks.
- **Faraday Cages:** A container made of metal mesh or foil that blocks electro-magnetic signals from devices, helping prevent relay hacks or remote unlocking. Useful for storing car keys overnight or while travelling.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY TOOLKIT

What is a Suspicious Activity?

A suspicious activity is a person, vehicle or circumstance that seems out of place or could indicate someone is planning or committing a crime. Focus on behaviors and circumstances, not appearance.



Examples of Behaviors to Report:

- unusual sounds and/or fighting or breaking glass
- someone checking or trying door handles, garages or mailboxes repeatedly
- unfamiliar vehicle lingering repeatedly in the same area, especially if occupants are watching homes
- door to door solicitors without proper ID
- suspicious packages, strong/chemical odors, or anything that makes you worry about safety

Note: do not rely on race, clothing style, or other personal attributes as the reason to report.

Reporting Suspicious Activity - Collect the 4-Ws

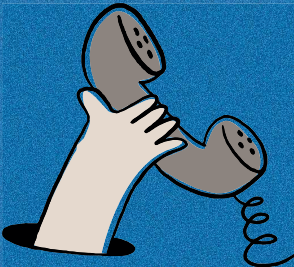
WHO: description, approximate age, gender, height, clothing, visible features (avoid assumptions)

WHAT: what is happening and why it seems suspicious?

WHEN: date and time or how long ago

WHERE: exact location, nearest address or cross streets

If a vehicle is involved: direction of travel, vehicle make/model, color, license plate.



Order of Reporting for Block Watch members

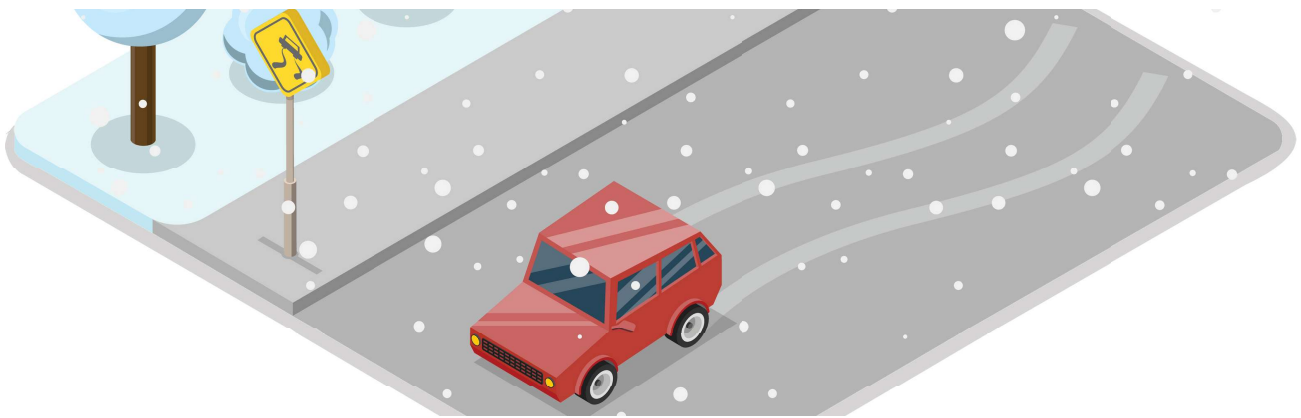
Step 1: Call the police Non-Emergency Line to report suspicious activity. If it's an emergency, call 911.

Step 2: Notify your BW Lead with your police report and suspicious activity.

Step 3: BW Lead notifies rest of the Block Watch group.

🚗 STOP THE SKID: HOW TO PREPARE YOUR VEHICLE AND DRIVE SAFELY IN B.C. WINTER 🚗

Preparing and adjusting your driving habits for the colder months is crucial



Vehicle & Tire Preparation

- **Tires are Law:** Winter tires are mandatory on most B.C. highways, including mountain passes, from October 1 to April 30. Check your route on DriveBC.
- **Service:** Get a pre-season inspection to check the health of your battery, brakes, lights, hoses, belts, and heating/defroster system.
- **Visibility:** Install good winter wiper blades and ensure all headlights, taillights, and signal lights are working.
- **Best Grip:** Use the 3-Peak Mountain Snowflake tires for the Interior and Northern B.C. conditions.
- **Kit Up:** Always carry a winter emergency kit, including warm clothes, a shovel, a flashlight, and traction aids (sand/kitty litter).
- **Full Fluids:** Keep your fuel tank at least half-full and top up with winter-grade windshield washer fluid.

Adjust Your Habits

- **Slow Down and Space Out:** Reduce your speed and maintain at least four seconds of following distance. Speed limits are for ideal conditions, not snow or ice.
- **Know Before You Go:** Check DriveBC.ca for road conditions and potential closures before leaving.
- **Be Gentle:** Avoid sudden braking, steering, or acceleration. Use smooth, slow movements.
- **No Cruise Control:** Never use cruise control on wet, icy, or snowy roads.



- **Watch for Ice:** Be extremely cautious on bridges, overpasses, and shaded areas—prime spots for black ice. If you hit ice, do not brake; ease off the gas and steer gently in the direction you want to go.
- **Clear Visibility:** Before driving, completely clear all snow and ice from your windows, lights, and roof.

We acknowledge the support of the Province of British Columbia.

The Block Watch Society of BC newsletter is a collective effort of volunteer Directors and society staff. If you see any errors, please notify blockwatch@blockwatch.com

BLOCK WATCH SOCIETY OF BC

blockwatch@blockwatch.com

www.blockwatch.com

OTHER WAYS TO CONNECT

 YouTube: Block Watch of BC

 Facebook: @bcblockwatch