



VILLAGE OF BELCARRA

"Between Forest and Sea"

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Mail Theft Advisory

As most Belcarra residents are aware, there have been three recent incidents of community mail boxes being broken into for the purpose of stealing mail. The purpose of this communiqué is to advise Belcarra residents of the follow-up action being taken by *Block Watch*, the RCMP, and *Canada Post*.

Immediately following the first break-in incident, *Block Watch* contacted *Canada Post* to review the particulars of the incident. The *Canada Post* official did not believe there was any risk of the theft leading to a 'duplicate master key' and thus endangering of all mail boxes in Belcarra — the official indicated that "the system was far too sophisticated for that".

The "mail-out slots" are being targeted to access any outgoing mail contained in those slots, and to also allow the other private mail slots within that group box to be accessed. *Canada Post* is analyzing the particulars of Belcarra's community mail box break-ins and, if indicated, will take remedial measures to ensure that there is no potential for a "master key forgery" scenario.

Belcarra's *Block Watch* is continuing to communicate with *Canada Post* and has also been in communication with the Rural Detail of the *Coquitlam RCMP Detachment*. It is important that the RCMP be involved in all crimes of identity theft, which is impetus for stealing mail.

Reporting of mailbox break-ins plays an important part in solving the problem. First and foremost, **anybody who witnesses a mailbox break-in should immediately call "9-1-1"**. In Belcarra, such fast action in reporting has previously provided fingerprint evidence and resulted in the culprits being caught.

To report a mailbox break-in after-the-fact, telephone the *Coquitlam RCMP Detachment* non-emergency number (604-945-1550). The RCMP Dispatcher will generate a file number and will also contact *Canada Post* security personnel (7/24) to report the incident on your behalf.

Corporal Neal Roemer has been communicating with *Canada Post* and will be speaking further with *Canada Post* officials regarding these break-ins. Corporal Roemer has advised us that this issue is now "front and centre" for the Rural Detail of the *Coquitlam RCMP Detachment*.

Reminder: The 'number one' action that residents can take to protect themselves from the crime of mail theft is to pick-up your mail on a daily basis.

**Ralph Drew
Mayor**

February 2, 2018.



Coquitlam RCMP Block Watch

Block Watch office: 604.552.7382

2986 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, B.C. V3B 7Y5

COQUITLAM RCMP BLOCK WATCH FAN OUT

TO BLOCK WATCH GROUPS IN AREA(S): **Belcarra & Anmore neighbourhoods** (01A)

Identity Theft Info & Tips

Police agencies across Canada have seen a growing trend towards the use of identity theft as a means of facilitating other crime and supporting criminal lifestyles.

Identity theft is extremely lucrative for criminals and can be as straightforward as stealing mail or vehicle insurance papers, accessing insecure personal information from the internet, or "skimming" a payment card.

Did you know...

...that identity theft is one focus of the Coquitlam RCMP's Crime Reduction Strategy?

Crime analysis showed that our local prolific offenders were becoming more involved in fraud and identity theft. We responded by including these crime types in our CRS to make sure our team is focused on the individuals who cause most crime and disorder in the communities we serve. [Learn more about Coquitlam RCMP's Crime Reduction Strategy.](#)

...that auto theft and mail theft are linked to identity theft?

After cracking an identity theft ring Coquitlam RCMP investigators found that one out of three of the stolen identity documents like insurance papers, driver's licenses and passports being used to create fraudulent ID could be traced back to vehicle theft files. Mail theft is also a popular starting point for identity theft because it is seen by criminals as a low risk/high reward activity.

...that identity theft victims may not know they're victims until years after the fact?

Some cases of identity theft involve criminals emptying bank accounts or running up charges on skimmed credit cards. But a stolen identity can also be used by criminals over the long term to lease vehicles, get approval for mortgages or car loans, or apply for passports and driver's licenses. In these cases, the victim may not even be aware that their identity has been stolen unless they are rigorous about checking up on themselves.

Protect Yourself...Protect Your Community

Do...

- Monitor your accounts. Always review bank and credit card statements and report anything unusual.
- Check your status with one of Canada's credit bureaus-EquiFax or Trans Union.
- Protect your identity by guarding PINs, payment cards, computers and personal information.
- Take care of your mail. Know the delivery schedule, make arrangements for mail pick up during vacations and act immediately if mail is missing or your mail box appears to have been tampered with.

Don't...

- Leave your mail untended while you are on vacation.
- Leave purses, wallets or other identity-related items like passports or computers in your vehicle. Not even "secured" in the glove box or the trunk.
- Give out personal information just because it's been requested. Make sure you understand why your information is needed, how it will be used, who will be using it and how it is being protected.
- Discard identity-related documents in recycling or regular garbage. Burn or shred them instead.

If you see something, say something!

Public safety is everyone's responsibility—and it's easy. The best way to do your part for public safety is to get connected to your neighbourhood, pay attention to what is going on around you and report any criminal or suspicious activity to the police.



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TO BLOCK WATCH GROUPS IN AREA(S): Belcarra & Anmore neighbourhoods (01A)

February 2, 2018

Reporting Crime to Coquitlam RCMP

Please note:

- Reports or complaints can only be submitted by phone or in person.
- **We do not accept reports or complaints via email, text or social media.**
- Reports of criminal or suspicious activity must be made to the police agency with jurisdiction over the location of the incident regardless of where suspects, victims or witnesses live.

Reporting Crime

Coquitlam RCMP is an intelligence-led police agency. That means that we focus our resources where intelligence tells us they will have the most positive impact on public safety. But without accurate, timely information about what's going on in your neighbourhood, we don't have all the intelligence we need. There are three simple things that you can do to make intelligence-led policing work:

- **Get connected to your neighbourhood.** When you know the people, vehicles & activities that are normal in your area it's easier to spot suspicious activity if it happens.
- **Pay attention to your environment.** Whether you're at home, at work, at school or anywhere in between, it pays to stay alert. Put away your cell phone, unplug your headphones & tune in to what's going on around you.
- **If you SEE something, SAY something.** If you see criminal or suspicious activity call us. We may not send an officer to investigate immediately but without your information we have no way of knowing what is going on in your area.

How to Report Crime

There are several options for anyone wanting to report criminal or suspicious activity to the Coquitlam RCMP. All of them are available 24 hours/day 7 days/week.

9-1-1 is for emergencies ONLY. An emergency is when lives are in danger, a serious crime is in progress or police are needed immediately.

Examples of 9-1-1 calls for police:

- An immediate threat to a person or property (e.g., shots fired).
- A serious crime is in-progress or has just happened & a suspect may still be on scene (e.g., a drug deal or a robbery).
- [9-1-1 FAQs.](#)

The Coquitlam RCMP **non-emergency/general information line (604-945-1550)** is for any situation except an emergency.

Examples of non-emergency calls for police:

- A crime has been committed but there are no suspects at the scene & no immediate danger to people or property (e.g., vehicle or property break-in discovered after-the-fact, a fraud).
- An on-going or chronic criminal activity where suspects are not currently at scene (e.g., vandalism, drug deals).
- A suspicious circumstance that may be an indication of criminal activity (e.g., you think your neighbours might have a residential grow operation).

If you have any information related an incident, please contact the Coquitlam RCMP at 604-945-1550.

Anyone wishing to provide information anonymously can contact **Crime Stoppers**:

- Phone: 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS)
- Online: Link to www.solvecrime.ca
- SMS: Text: BCTIP and your message to CRIMES (274637)
- Facebook. [Link to Facebook.](#)
- [Download the Crime Stoppers mobile app for iPhone](#) or [download the Crime Stoppers app for Android](#)

9-1-1 Frequently Asked Questions

What can I expect when I call to report something?

- You can expect to be asked a lot of detailed questions. Call-takers are professionals, trained to lead you through an established set of questions to make sure our investigators have all the information needed about the incident you're reporting.
- The best thing you can do is remain calm and answer each question as clearly as you can and in as much detail as possible.

An example of some of the questions you will be asked:

- Your name.
- Your address or the closest intersection. Unlike landlines, if you are calling from a cell or internet phone, location information is not automatically provided.
- A phone number you can be reached at in case you are disconnected the call taker can call you back.
- Details of the incident. The more information you can provide the better, such as the suspect's description and vehicle information if applicable.

What do I do if I accidentally dial 9-1-1?

- Stay on the line, do not hang up.
- Our call takers must confirm the callers well-being. If you hang up before your well-being has been confirmed, call takers must try and return your call. If we are unable to reach you by phone, a police officer may be deployed to confirm your safety. This takes resources away from legitimate 9-1-1 calls.

Tips to avoid misdialing 9-1-1

- Lock your phone.
- Don't program 9-1-1 into your phone. Instead, program our non-emergency number, 604-945-1550.
- Don't call 9-1-1 to test it. Trust us, it works.

Can Coquitlam RCMP take crime reports from people who don't speak English?

- Yes. 9-1-1 has interpreters available in 170 languages and our local team offers a range of language skills as well for non-emergency reporting.

Know someone who doesn't speak English fluently? Share these two simple tips with them to help them in case they are ever in need of emergency services:

1. Encourage them to learn the English word for the language they do speak (i.e., learn to say "Spanish" instead of "Espanol").

2. Teach them the English words for "police", "fire" and "ambulance". Knowing those three words in English will help speed up the process of finding an interpreter and getting the help they need.