



**BLOCK WATCH** ®

An Informative Newsletter for British Columbia Published Quarterly by the Block Watch Society of BC.

[www.blockwatch.com](http://www.blockwatch.com)

### **OPERATION RED NOSE**

Operation Red Nose is a unique program dedicated to the fight against impaired driving. Essentially, it is a volunteer driving service provided during the Christmas Holiday Season to all motorists who have been drinking or who do not feel fit to drive their own vehicle. It is an original way of getting a safe ride in one's own vehicle without getting behind the wheel and... it's free.

For more information check out:

<http://operationnezrouge.com>

Source: <http://operationnezrouge.com>

### **CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY TIPS**

- Make sure your artificial tree is labelled as fire-retardant.
- Never use indoor lights outside.
- Avoid overloading electrical circuits or extension cords.
- Always unplug Christmas tree and other indoor decorating lights before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Keep candles well away from trees, decorations and other combustibles, and never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Place your tree at least one metre (three feet) from fireplaces or other heat sources. Never place your tree where it may block access to an exit.
- Safely dispose of cut trees as soon as possible after Christmas. Dried-out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

Source: <http://www.richmond.ca/safety/firerescue/prevention/home/holidays.htm>

# **Block Watch News**

## **December 2013, January & February 2014**

### **AWAY FOR THE HOLIDAYS – SAFETY TIPS**

- If you are going on vacation, leave your home in the care of someone you trust and let them know where you can be reached in case of emergency.
- Arrange to have your mail and newspapers picked up, the snow removed as necessary.
- Have a neighbour check both inside and outside the house every few days.
- Use timers on interior lights when you are going to be away or just out for the evening.
- Leave shades, blinds and curtains in normal positions.
- Do not share your vacation plans in social media, like Facebook and Twitter.

Source: <http://vancouver.ca/police/crime-prevention/for-homes-rental-properties/home-security.html>

### **ONLINE SHOPPING SAFETY TIPS**

- Before providing credit card information on line verify the validity of the site and make sure it is secure.
- Go to the company web site directly and be cautious of unsolicited e-mail links.
- Read the company's privacy and security policies.
- Log onto phonebusters.com to learn more about internet crime.
- Watch out for phishing websites, they are created to look almost like the real sites. If you come across something suspicious, report it to [info@antifraudcentre.ca](mailto:info@antifraudcentre.ca)

Source: <http://cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=87&lang=ua&id=1&contentId=12525>

## HOLIDAY SHOPPING SAFETY TIPS

- Don't withdraw more money than you need when visiting ATM's.
- Men should carry their wallets in their front pockets as opposed to their back pockets or jackets.
- Never leave your purchases unattended, even for a short period of time.
- If possible, park under lighting & close to entrances & exits.
- Place all of your purchases in your trunk to avoid drawing attention to your vehicle.

Source: <http://cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=87&lang=ua&id=1&contentId=12525>

## HOME IMPROVEMENT SCAM

**Pitch:** Rogue door to door contractors will come to your home to seal or repave your driveway, or do your roof with left over material from a previous job. In some cases, they offer a furnace repair that you didn't schedule or a gas fireplace "inspection".

**Target:** Homeowners

**Result:** Homeowner is out of pocket for unnecessary repairs or poor work resulting in a job having to be re-done.

Source: <http://mbc.bbb.org/top-ten-scams/>

## TELEMARKETING FRAUD (TELEPHONE SCAMS) OR EMAIL FRAUD

Fraudulent Scams asking for money - usually via mail or e-mail: A typical example of this is the "Nigerian Scam" where you are told that you have been selected to help move millions of dollars out of a country and are asked to give out your banking information or to pay taxes or storage fees, etc. Please contact Phonebusters which is a joint force multinational police agency which deals with such activities.

Source: <http://vancouver.ca/police/online-crime-reporting/fraud.html>

## ONLINE PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

- Don't send personal information in email or instant messages.
- Be suspicious of emails asking for personal, financial or sensitive information.
- Use caution with links supplied in emails - do not click on links if you don't know the sender.
- Monitor your credit and check any financial statements closely.
- Before you get rid of your old computer, wipe your hard drive - deleting files isn't enough to ensure all sensitive information is gone; if you need help, find a reputable company to do it.
- Secure your wireless network.

Source: <http://vancouver.ca/police/crime-prevention/for-individuals/online-identity-theft.html>

## SENIOR FRAUD – FAKE CHARITIES

If someone calls you at your home, or shows up at your door claiming to represent a charity ask them for their charity registration number, which every charity in Canada has. Ask for a pamphlet and if you are interested in donating money, take the time to call Canada Customs and Revenue Agency at 1-800-267-2384 to make sure that the charity is in good standing. If you do wish to donate money, look up charities that support causes that you believe in

## SENIOR FRAUD – “PYRAMID SCHEME”.

Victims invest money into a company, and are promised greater returns when they convince others to join. When the pyramid collapses, the only one left with the money is the person on top, and they have often already skipped town.

Source: <http://vancouver.ca/police/crime-prevention/for-individuals/safety-seniors.html>