



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

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

## Prevent Wildfires

Many fires occur in spring and early summer when human activity increases. Grass burning and spring cleanup fires occasionally escape control and result in wildfires. When summer arrives, the number of people in the woods increases and as they travel, recreationalists can accidentally cause fires.

Another cause of wildfires does not arise from accidents or carelessness, but from **arson**.

Other prevention considerations:

- Do not burn in windy conditions.
- Do not discard smoking materials from vehicles, use interior ashtrays.
- Lawn & farm equipment should have properly working spark arresters to prevent sparks from exiting through the exhaust pipes.
- All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) produce an enormous amount of heat and can ignite brush from their exhaust systems.

Wildfire prevention is about keeping fires from starting. When using fire in or near woods, be extremely careful. People are responsible for starting about half of the wildfires in British Columbia. Pay attention to your surroundings.

Report fire sightings or the smell of smoke to **1-800-663-5555** or **\*5555** on cellular networks.

[Source](#)

# Block Watch News

June, July & August 2016

## Campfire Safety Tips

**Careless use of campfires** is one of the leading causes of forest fires.

- When building a campfire, select your campsite carefully.
- Prepare your campfire by removing all leaves, twigs and other flammable material from the area.
- Choose a proper fire pit or make a ring of rocks at least three metres from trees, shrubs, structures and debris.
- Don't leave a campfire unattended, and do keep a pail of water close by at all times.

[Source](#)

## Summer Driving Safety Tips

More fatalities occur on Canadian roads during the summer months than at any other time of year, including the winter holiday season. Alcohol, fatigue and aggressive driving are often implicated in these tragedies.

- Before leaving on vacation, have your vehicle checked to make sure everything is working properly.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled up properly at all times.
- Drive at a safe speed. Speeding increases the likelihood and severity of a crash.
- If you drive with a wireless phone, avoid unnecessary calls and always make the driving task your top priority.

Always be on the lookout for and yield to vulnerable road users, even if they don't have the right-of-way. Summer also brings increased construction on our roads and highways. Be prepared to stop or slow down in construction zones.

[Source](#)

## Swimming Safety Tips

- Do not go beyond your abilities
- Walk, do not run
- Look before you leap or dive in
- Never swim alone
- Be careful getting in and out of the pool
- Do not drink
- Watch out for hazards

[Source](#)

## BC Distracted Driving Penalties Set to Change

New and harsher penalties for distracted driving in B.C. are set to be announced May 9<sup>th</sup>.

It is expected the B.C. Government will raise the basic fine to \$334 and increase penalty points for being caught driving while distracted.

Currently, distracted drivers receive three demerit points.

Repeat offenders will also pay higher fines and driving prohibitions may be considered at some point in the future.

On average, about 81 people are killed every year in B.C. as a result of distracted driving.

[Source](#)

## Boating Safety Tips

- Be weather wise
- Follow a Pre-Departure Checklist
- Get your Pleasure Craft Operator Card
- Use Common Sense
- Designate an Assistant Skipper
- Develop a Float Plan
- Make proper use of Life Jackets
- Don't mix Alcohol and Boating
- Learn to Swim
- Take a Boating Course
- Consider a Free Vessel Safety Check

For more information on boating safety, please click [here](#)

[Source](#)

## Emergency Preparedness Kit

- Water – at least two litres of water per person per day; include small bottles that can be carried easily in case of an evacuation order
- Food that won't spoil, such as canned food, energy bars and dried foods (replace food and water once a year)
- Manual can-opener
- Crank or battery-powered flashlight (and extra batteries). Replace batteries once a year.
- Crank, battery-powered radio (and extra batteries) or Weatheradio
- First aid kit
- Extra keys to your car and house
- Some cash in smaller bills, such as \$10 bills and change for payphones
- A copy of your emergency plan and contact information
- If applicable, other items such as prescription medication, infant formula, equipment for people with disabilities, or food, water and medication for your pets or service animal (personalize according to your needs)

For more information on Emergency Preparedness, click [here](#)

[Source](#)

## Summer Crime Prevention Tips

When warmer weather arrives, some residents may leave windows or doors open in order to cool the house. Recognize that these may be common points of entry for would-be thieves.

Don't leave your house open while you are away and take steps to minimize your vulnerability while you are at home. Try to view your own house and property the way a thief might see it; identify vulnerabilities and take steps to make things more secure.

Telling the whole Social Media community that you are away on holidays may not be a good idea. Messages can be forwarded and shared with people you don't know. To someone who is looking for an opportunity to commit a crime, you have just extended an invitation that says your house and property are unguarded.

[Source](#)