Block Watch leads to arrest

Darren Handschuh - Nov 17, 2016 / 4:09 pm

Photo: Getty Images

RCMP may have been the ones to make the arrest, but it was a local Block Watch member who solved the crime.

Vernon RCMP announced that on Tuesday evening they had arrested two men in a stolen truck that was loaded with stolen items.

The pair of suspected thieves appeared to have been breaking into vehicles around the North Okanagan. The region has seen a rash of theft from vehicles over the past few months.

But the demise of the crooks started with a phone call from an observant member of the Hartnell Road area Block Watch program who alerted police to the suspicious vehicle in the area.

Police then swooped in, and made the arrest.

According to its website, the main objective of the Block Watch Society of BC is to partner with communities to build safer neighbourhoods by encouraging residents to take a proactive approach to crime prevention and safety.

Mike Moyer, safe communities co-ordinator with the regional district, said the Hartnell Road arrests is a prime example of Block Watch in action.

"That's the sort of thing they are always trying to promote," said Moyer. "When you see something suspicious, call it in."

Moyer said there are Block Watch neighbourhoods located throughout the city.

Moyer said anyone interested can register online, or by calling him at 250-550-3733.

"I can come out and do a presentation for them," he said.

It doesn't cost any money to join and the program has been proven effective in reducing crime.

The B.C. program was modelled on a similar project in Seattle which was effective in reducing residential break and enters by up to 60 per cent.

In 1993, the Block Watch Society was officially registered as a non-profit society in B.C.

Since its inception, the Block Watch Program of BC has been influential in reducing residential crime and promoting increased feelings of neighbourhood security.