



News Release

1450 K.L.O. Road
Kelowna, B.C. V1W 3Z4
Telephone: (250) 763-4918
Fax: (250) 763-0606
www.regionaldistrict.com

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Regional District Launches Block Watch

Neighbours in three Central Okanagan areas have been organized and those in more than a dozen other neighbourhoods are preparing to join a crime prevention program.

Residents in two phases of the Sunset Ranch development, three neighbourhoods in Peachland and one in the Sonoma Pines area have already started their Block Watch programs. Regional District Crime Prevention Coordinator Duane MacTavish will soon assist people living in two Lake Country and more than 12 areas of West Kelowna, set up similar crime fighting Block Watches.

MacTavish says the Block Watch concept is simple, "It's designed to help neighbours watch out for neighbours and helps citizens get involved in discouraging and preventing crime at the street and neighbourhood level." He adds, "Neighbours know their neighbours, their habits, their comings and goings and because of that awareness they may be the first to know when someone or something suspicious and unusual is going on and report it to the police. By working together, neighbours can actively prevent crime in the most effective way – before it happens."

Block Watch participants not only learn how to be more aware of their neighbourhood surroundings, but also how to make their homes less inviting to thieves, how to prevent auto theft and how to recognize and report suspicious activity. MacTavish says, "It doesn't require a lot of time and is easy to organize a Block Watch area. It's also a great way to bring neighbours together."

MacTavish encourages anyone living in the Central Okanagan East and Central Okanagan West Electoral Areas or the municipalities of Lake Country, Peachland and West Kelowna that might be interested in receiving more information or a presentation on the Block Watch program to contact him at 250-469-6347 or email crimeprevention@cord.bc.ca.

For more information visit the Block Watch program webpage in the Crime and Emergency Services section of the Regional District website: www.regionaldistrict.com.

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Contact:

Bruce Smith
Communications Coordinator
250-469-6339

Duane MacTavish
RDCO Crime Prevention Coordinator
250-469-6347