

CRIME PREVENTION

WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT CRIME

NEWSLETTER

How to Prevent Theft of Catalytic Converters

The lower mainland is currently experiencing a surge in incidents involving the theft of catalytic converters. A catalytic converter plays a crucial role in your vehicle by effectively controlling and reducing harmful emissions from the engine before they are released through the exhaust pipe. Although it may not be immediately evident upon inspecting your car, you will certainly become aware of the theft as soon as you start the engine. In the absence of a catalytic converter, your vehicle will produce a noticeably loud and intense roaring sound that will only grow louder as you accelerate, potentially accompanied by the release of fumes into the cabin. These thieves are specifically targeting locations such as shopping malls, driveways, school parking lots, and busy business districts, and they are carrying out their criminal activities during daylight hours using conventional metal cutting tools.



- Secure your car's catalytic converter by welding it to the frame. This will not only make it more challenging for thieves to steal it but also increases the time required for the theft.
- Consult with an automotive expert regarding the installation of a catalytic converter lock or alarm for your vehicle. Additionally, consider employing protective coverings, such as the "Catclamp" device, to discourage potential thieves. The Catclamp effectively increases the level of difficulty for thieves equipped with reciprocating saws, making it significantly harder for them to steal your catalytic converter.
- Park your vehicle in a well-illuminated and bustling location, preferably near building entrances. Additionally, consider installing surveillance cameras to keep a watchful eye on your vehicle and deter any potential theft, particularly ones targeting your catalytic converter.
- Adjust the settings of your vehicle's alarm system to activate when it senses any form of vibration. Criminals who target catalytic converters are attracted to vehicles that remain stationary for prolonged periods.
- If you come across individuals behaving suspiciously in parking lots or in close proximity to vehicles, whether it be at your residence, workplace, or any other location, it is important to promptly report such incidents. Once you have informed the police, it is advisable to keep your community updated and vigilant by engaging in conversations with your neighbours. By doing so, you can contribute to enhancing the overall awareness within your community and promoting a safer environment for everyone.

Fraud Prevention

Fraudulent messages pop up everyday in all areas of contact. It is beneficial to learn how to spot clues for fraudulent communication. Be careful with whom you are communicating and how information is delivered. Fraudsters take advantage of our busy life and use many creative ways to steal your personal or financial information. The different ways include scam calls, phishing emails, and fraudulent text messages. Therefore, it is important for you to know how to identify clues to spot these scams.

Clue 1: Phrases that make you feel threatened or surprised

Fraudsters use emotionally charged phrases to target your senses. They may bombard you with statements that make you feel fearful or surprised. If they can derail you from thinking clearly, it gives them a chance to phish sensitive information. In addition, in your confusion they give you instructions and lead you deeper into the scam. Some examples of phrases include threatening arrest, revealing intimate videos, or claiming you won a big prize. Legitimate companies and institutions will not threaten you for information.

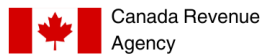
Clue 2: Asking for unconventional payments

Fraudsters use payment options such as gift cards, cryptocurrency and e-transfers because they are difficult to track and recover. They will ask you to secretly purchase or transfer money. Legitimate businesses and institutions will not use these types of payment options for deposits or returns. Additionally, legitimate businesses will not ask you to complete tasks in secret. A key giveaway is the secrecy involved in the scam. Fraudsters do not want you to share their actions to others because another person could spot their scam.

Clue 3: Sending phishing lures

Common phishing tactics include sending suspicious links through text messages or emails. Phishing links can fit to current events. For example, during tax season fraudsters spoofing as the Canadian Revenue Agency will send you links asking you to click for returns. The clues that tell you it is fraudulent often come from the text. The font may be different from a traditional message and there may be typos. Moreover, the link provided is a giveaway that it is a scam. The links are designed to look similar to a familiar company or institution but never the same. Do your own research into the company or institution and log in to the official site.

You may already know some tips to spotting scams and with these additional clues you should be able to spot fraudulent indicators. Put your knowledge to the test. What are some clues that tell you these pictures are fraudulent?



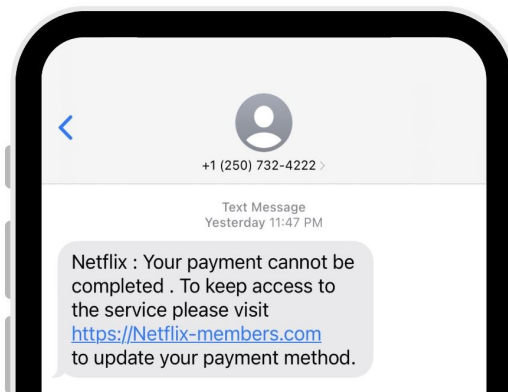
Dear Tax Payer,

Part of your Canadian tax expenses for the year 2024 as been processed and completed and you are entitled to a refund of \$990.50 CAD. you are required to follow the secured link below to login with your social insurance number.

to access the secure form for your Tax refund, please click the secured link >>>
<https://fakeCRAScamlink.ca/refund>

Sincerely,

Canada Revenue Agency



New Year Goals

We want to encourage you to build new habits and continue to strengthen your crime prevention knowledge. Strengthening your existing habits not only make your community safer but also increases your situational awareness for your neighbourhood. Step into the new year by taking a proactive approach to your crime prevention habits.



An effective habit to have is to build your neighbourhood baseline. Your baseline is a point of reference you can use to compare what you see, to what you know. It is the little details in your neighbourhood that help you build your baseline. Details such as who lives next to you, how many people are in their household, and what kind of car they drive can help you build your baseline. If someone suspicious appears in your neighbourhood, these little details can help you determine that something suspicious or criminal is about to happen. As a result, building your baseline helps you with crime prevention in your community. Moreover, don't be afraid to say hi to your neighbours because getting to know them will significantly increase your knowledge of your neighbourhood. Your neighbourhood baseline can evolve every year with new neighbours moving in and changes in life so it is important to keep yourself informed through observations and connections. Start building your baseline today, what do you notice about your neighbourhood?

To start a Block Watch Group

Interested in starting a Block Watch group? Let us tell you a little about Block Watch! Block Watch is a program that brings the police and the communities together. This program helps you build connections and relationships with people in your neighbourhood and the police while striving for the common goal of crime prevention.

Select a Captain/Co-Captain

- ◇ Each Captain/Co-Captain to submit an application and will be contacted for a suitability interview. Candidates will then need to complete a free Police Information Check.

Recruit and build your group

- ◇ Upon confirmation from the Block Watch office on completing and passing all required steps in becoming a Captain/Co-Captain, you may begin to recruit homes that are near to you with the provided recruiting materials from the Block Watch office. To build an effective Block Watch, try to involve 50-75% of households in your area.

Complete activation of your team

1. **Complete** Block Watch Captain/Participant training – invite everyone in your group to participate in a virtual/in-person training session.
2. **Submit** your participating household list.
3. **Qualify** for Block Watch street signs once above steps are completed.

If you are interested in creating a Block Watch group in your area, email us your name and address at blockwatch@richmond.ca or call 604-207-4829.

BUSINESS LINK

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NEWSLETTER

Enhancing Security Measures for Commercial Buildings

Ensuring the safety and security of a business is crucial for its prosperity. Crime prevention plays a vital role in minimizing losses. Therefore, it is imperative to dedicate time to evaluate the susceptibility of your business to various forms of criminal activities. This assessment should encompass analyzing the physical layout of your premises and implementing comprehensive security measures. It is crucial to take certain precautionary steps to mitigate potential risks and threats.



Here are some recommended measures:

1. Maintain Unobstructed Visibility—Ensure that plants, trees, or shrubs surrounding doors or windows do not obstruct the lighting and are trimmed to a height of less than three feet.
2. Strengthen Door Security—Opt for high-quality doors and equip them with high-security deadbolt locks. Supplement these with latch guards and security hinges to further fortify entry points.
3. Install Perimeter Fencing—If feasible, consider installing perimeter fencing around your property, along with a secure gate. This acts as an additional barrier, deterring unauthorized access.
4. Display Security Signs—Mount signs indicating the presence of 24-hour security and alarm systems, acting as a visual deterrent to potential criminals.
5. Report Suspicious Activity—Encourage employees and staff members to promptly report any suspicious individuals or vehicles in the vicinity. This aids in maintaining a proactive security environment.
6. Illuminate the Building—Ensure that your building is well-lit, both internally and externally. Sufficient lighting contributes to increased visibility and discourages criminal activities.

Please report all suspicious or criminal activity to the police.

Richmond RCMP Non-Emergency line [604-278-1212](tel:604-278-1212).

If you witness a crime in progress, dial **9-1-1**.

Online reporting available at bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/richmond/report for the following:

- Damage/mischief to property under \$5,000
- Damage/mischief to a vehicle under \$5,000
- Hit and run to an unoccupied vehicle or property
- Theft of bicycle under \$5,000
- Theft under \$5,000
- Theft from vehicle under \$5,000
- Lost property

