



# BLOCK WATCH FAQ'S



## Q. What is the Block Watch Program?

Block Watch is a free RCMP endorsed community program operated by the City of Vernon Community Safety Unit.

The Community Safety Unit will implement, coordinate and monitor an effective Block Watch Program in the City of Vernon. Citizens in the community are responsible for organizing, operating and maintaining the Block Watch program in their neighbourhoods.

## Q. What are the goals of the Block Watch Program?

- For the community to become actively involved in crime prevention in their community
- Reduction in crime in the community
- Increase in the community reporting suspicious activities to Police
- Promote community awareness and community pride

## Q. How does the Block Watch Program work?

Block Watch operates on the idea that the Police cannot be everywhere at once. The Police require the assistance of the community to effectively prevent, reduce and investigate crime in the community. The Police need citizens to be active in crime prevention by identifying and reporting all suspicious activities in their community. Block Watch can only be successful if a majority of the community are actively involved. The more people who are involved with Block Watch the more successful the program.

## Q. How long do I need to be involved with Block Watch?

Your block can be involved for as long as you meet all the requirements. The Block Watch program is monitored by the Vernon Community Safety Unit Crime Prevention Coordinator. Any Groups not taking the necessary steps required to keep your Block Watch active will have the program decommissioned and their signs removed.

## Q. What are the duties of the Block Watch Captain and Co-Captain?

Block Captains and Co-Captains must be genuinely interested in preventing crime in their neighbourhood, and must be prepared to listen to and communicate with the participants in their crime prevention group. They must be prepared to constructively promote Block Watch, and be able to pass a Police information check. Their basic responsibilities are to:

1. Canvas their block to explain the Block Watch Program and encourage neighbours to participate.





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2. Maintain an accurate list and map of all participants in their Crime Prevention Group. Update this list and map every six months to ensure all information is current. Supply the Crime Prevention Officer or Block Watch Coordinator with all current information.
3. Host the initial meeting to implement the program in their neighbourhood. This meeting is hosted by the Block Watch Captain, either at their home or another suitable location which they are able to arrange.
4. Ensure that the yearly neighbourhood meetings are held.
5. Set a good example by initiating home security and target hardening measures in their own home.
6. Identify and work closely with other Block Captains and Co-Captains.
7. Act as a liaison and communication link with the Area Coordinator, the Block Watch Coordinator, the police department, and the participants on their Block.
8. Distribute the Block Watch newsletter (via email) to all participants in their Group.
9. Responsible for distributing "fan out" of important property crime information to Group participants.
10. Welcome new residents by explaining the Block Watch Program and encouraging their participation.
11. Report to the Block Watch office all break and enters and attempted break and enters in their neighbourhood.
12. Canvass neighbours to see who would be interested in Block Captain, or Co-Captain should these positions become vacant.
13. Work closely with the Block Watch Coordinator and assist them when required.

## **Q. Who fills out the Captain and Co-Captain Security application forms?**

Only those people who are becoming Captains and Co-Captains need to fill out these application forms. Participants are not required to fill out the application forms.

## **Q. What if there are no changes to our Group...do I still need to send in a Block map?**

Yes. Each calendar year you must send in an updated block map to the Block Watch office. Even if your block map has no changes you must send in your block map annually. By sending in your block map annually you keep your Block Watch program active.





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## Q. How do I add new neighbours to our Block Watch program?

Just add the new neighbours with their contact information to the map and send it to the Block Watch office at:

Protective Services/Community Safety Unit  
Block Watch Program  
3005 -33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Vernon, BC, V1T 9X3  
or email to [blockwatch@vernon.ca](mailto:blockwatch@vernon.ca)

## Q. What happens when a Captain or Co-Captain moves or resigns?

Contact the Block Watch office. The remaining participants must find a new Captain or Co-Captain or the Crime Prevention Group will be decommissioned.

The new person must then fill out a security clearance form (PIC) available from the Crime Prevention Coordinator or the Vernon RCMP Detachment.

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