

TIP SHEET



Rural Crime Prevention

Don't let your guard down just because you live in the country!

Rural communities have their own unique crime problems - like theft of crops, timber, livestock, and expensive farm equipment. Vandals do more than break mailboxes, they can destroy crops and fields. Alcohol and drug abuse problems plague rural youth as well as those in the suburbs and cities. And of course, crimes like burglary, rape, assault, and auto theft happen in rural areas, but less frequently than in cities. Invest some time and money in prevention now. What's the payoff? Better security around your property, less worry about crime and your family's safety. Be a good neighbour - when you're out and about, keep an eye on neighbours' homes, livestock, and equipment. Tell them and the police about anything that makes you uneasy or suspicious.



PROTECT EQUIPMENT AND LIVESTOCK

CHECK THE DOORS AND LOCKS

- Make sure external doors, in your home and outbuildings are solid wood or metal and have dead bolt locks.
- Use the locks!
- Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available locks or with a broomstick or wooden dowel in the track to jam the door in case someone tries to pry it open.
- Insert screws in the upper track going into the fixed frame, to prevent anyone from lifting the door from its track.
- Secure double-hung windows by sliding a bolt or nail through a hole drilled at a downward angle in each top corner of the inside sash and part way through the outside sash.
- Secure basement windows well.

CHECK THE OUTSIDE

- Thieves hate bright lights. Install outside lights and keep them on at night.
- Keep your house, driveway, barns, and other buildings well lighted at night. Use timers that automatically turn on outside lights when it gets dark.
- Consider motion sensors that set off lights or alarms.
- Prune back shrubbery that hides doors, windows, lights, and would-be burglars.
- Keep your fences in good repair. Secure all access roads with gates or cables stretched between posts cemented in the ground. Make them visible with flags or streamers.
- Warn thieves that you're on the alert with "No Trespassing," "No Hunting," and other signs around your property.

- Operation Identification - marking tools, guns, and equipment with a permanent identification number such as a license plate number - has helped reduce theft in many rural areas.
- Work with law enforcement to determine the best methods, and make it a community project.
- To help stop modern rustlers, tattoo all livestock (usually on the ears). Although it's easier to use ear tags or neck chains, these can be removed. Mark young stock soon after birth. Take regular counts of all livestock. Secure gas pumps, gas tanks, storage bins, and grain elevators with sturdy padlocks or dead bolts.
- Keep small equipment - like mowers, bikes, snowmobiles - locked in a barn or garage.
- Keep guns locked and unloaded in a secure place away from curious children and would-be thieves.

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- Never leave keys in vehicles or farm equipment. Always lock your trucks and other vehicles when they're not in use. And don't leave tools in the open back of a pick-up truck or in an unsecured truck bed toolbox.
- Don't leave major equipment in a field overnight. Lock it in a barn or shed near the house, or park where it can be seen from your house or a neighbour's.
- If machines must be left out for long periods of time, disable them by removing the rotor, distributor, or battery.

GUARD YOUR CROPS

- Store harvested crops in protected and locked locations
- Consider marking grain, hay, or similar crops with Non-toxic confetti that is easily removed by storage or processing facilities
- Keep a record of your valuable timber. Mark each with a paint strip.
- Keep storage areas neat and well-organized so that any theft will be noticed immediately. This also warns Potential thieves that the owner is watchful.
- Check employees' references. Before they start, talk to them regarding your crime prevention measures.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- Get together with others in the community to start a Neighbourhood or Farm Watch group. Involve all ages, and work with law enforcement. Recruit from churches and civic groups. Use CB radios or cellular phones to patrol and report suspicious activities to the police.
- When you go away, stop delivery of your mail Or newspapers or ask a neighbour to pick them up. You want to create the illusion that someone is at home following everyday routines. Have neighbours check your property, and return the favour when they leave on business or vacation trips.