

New Initiative turns the focus to repeat victims of break and enters

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Today, Alberta RCMP Deputy Commissioner Curtis Zablocki and Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, Kathleen Ganley announced the launch of Project Lock Up, a new victim-focused initiative that brings law enforcement agencies and citizen-led crime prevention groups together to provide an enhanced and escalating response to Albertans who have been hit hardest by break and enters.

The new initiative, to be rolled-out in partnership between the Alberta RCMP, Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta, Alberta Sheriffs, Alberta Community Peace Officers, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officers, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Branch, Alberta Rural Crime Watch Association, Alberta Citizens on Patrol and Insurance Bureau of Canada consists of four key components:

1. More patrols in the hardest-hit places.
 - Based on an analysis of calls for service from the public, RCMP Crime Reduction Analysts produce a report of actionable information related to repeat victims of break and enters and crime hotspots.
 - Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta will conduct further analysis and distribute a report of crime trends, repeat victims and repeat offenders to all project partners.
 - RCMP, in coordination with its enforcement partners and citizen-led partners, will use this specialized report to guide their patrols.
2. Enhanced victim support.
 - Albertans who have been victimized the most by break and enters will receive an enhanced follow-up from the RCMP either in person or by phone.
 - During the follow-up, RCMP will work to get a better understanding of what happened, provide crime prevention advice and in some cases, arrange a customized home security assessment by an expert to prevent future incidents from taking place.
3. Additional tools for repeat victims.
 - Albertans hit hardest by break and enters will be equipped with the Trace Pen, a property marking device that will increase the likelihood that stolen property is returned to the owner and that criminals are held accountable.
 - As appropriate, more innovative tools can be deployed that will help police identify and arrest criminals operating in the area.
4. Enhanced investigative response.
 - Alberta RCMP's Crime Reduction Units will deploy special operations that will focus on arresting criminals operating in targeted areas.
 - Priority properties will receive an enhanced response from Alberta RCMP's Forensic Identification Services unit.

Quick Facts:

- A recent Alberta RCMP analysis indicated that 15 per cent of places broken into represent 32 per cent of all break and enters. That means one third of these properties have been broken into more than once and is likely to be targeted again.
- The new initiative is based on two similar projects in the U.K., the Huddersfield Project and MetTrace Project, which resulted in residential break and enters dropping by approximately 30 per cent in targeted areas.
- The Trace Pen property marking devices are available through local Citizens on Patrol and Rural Crime Watch groups.

Quotes:

“Almost a year ago we launched our seven-point action plan to combat rural crime with the RCMP — since then we have seen a significant drop in property across rural Alberta. We will continue building on that momentum, working with our law enforcement agencies and citizen-led organizations, to support safe communities.”

- Minister of Justice and Solicitor General Kathleen Ganley

I want Albertans to know that they can count on the RCMP – we are listening to the communities we serve. With the help of our partners, Project Lock Up enables us to respond to the individuals who have been affected most by property crime.

- Deputy Commissioner Curtis Zablocki, Commanding Officer, Alberta RCMP

Project Lock Up is truly an intelligence-led and collaborative approach to Albertans who have been victimized by break and enters. We find the people who need the most support and along with our partners, work with them to ensure they are never targeted again.

- Supt. Peter Tewfik, Officer in Charge of Crime Reduction Strategies, Alberta RCMP

"Simple changes such as ensuring you have an up-to-date inventory of your property and using identifying markers can help reduce thefts in Alberta. Alberta's home and auto insurers are committed to reducing crime and we are proud to be a partner in Project Lock Up. Alberta's insurance industry lives in these communities and care deeply about these roots. We want to work with all partners to do everything we can to reduce the incidents of thefts across the province."

- Henry Tso, Vice-President of Investigative Services, Insurance Bureau of Canada