



BC Crime Prevention Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Renters can help prevent crime in their communities

Burnaby: Our home is our castle, our sanctuary, a place where we feel safe - or should. The ongoing gang-related shootings in Metro Vancouver recently have compromised that sense of security and left many of us frightened, anxious and angry.

Going to a mall to do errands makes us think twice. Even driving down the street (especially after a mother in her car was murdered, with her child in the back seat) shakes us to our very core.

But when you discover that the person who rents the apartment down the hall from you is a known criminal - who brings drugs, violence and other crime right into your building - it is the ultimate betrayal of our sense of security and we feel powerless.

One of the ways to take back our community is to realize that every single one of us can prevent crime. It is our duty as citizens to do what we can to make our homes, neighbourhoods and communities safe by minimizing the risk of criminal activity.

So what can you do, if you live in, manage or own a rental apartment, to ensure that criminal types are not going to be renting the apartment next door? Or are attracted to your building because it's an easy target for vandalism, trafficking, theft from vehicles, or mailbox theft?

The answer is to be proactive and start up a program to help keep criminals out of your community. The BC Crime Prevention Association is the administrator for such a program - Crime Free Multi Housing (CFMH).

The Crime Free Multi Housing Program brings together apartment owners, managers, residents, police and the community to work together. The program is unique in that it provides training that focuses on:

- teaching crime prevention techniques
- awareness of criminal activity such as grow ops, meth labs etc.,
- proper tenant screening,
- reducing criminal activity through CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design). CPTED addresses issues like unlit parking lots, locks, building/shrub/tree visibility, mailbox security, etc., and
- promoting residential/community interaction or, in plain language, getting to know your neighbours to encourage a feeling of community and connectedness.

The benefits of the Crime Free Multi Housing Program are abundant: for residents – having pride in your home; for managers/owners – keeping good tenants, improved safety for owners, managers and residents, and lower maintenance and repair costs, which are often associated to criminal activity. Reduced criminal activity means fewer response calls by police.

We, as a community, do have influence. We have the resources to help ourselves and the police make our neighbourhoods safer and to say that we will not tolerate criminals living next door or even in our community. We do have the power to make a difference.

For more information about the Crime Free Multi Housing Program in BC visit www.bccpa.org or call 604-291-9959, ext. 223. You can also contact your local police department or RCMP detachment to learn more about the program.

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Our Ask an Expert column is an additional resource for crime prevention information pertinent to British Columbia. The column can be viewed at www.bccpa.org. Topics will be frequently updated and refreshed depending upon response.

The British Columbia Crime Prevention Association (BCCPA) is a recognized team of citizens, business and police dedicated to preventing crime through community partnerships and consumer awareness.

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