




Block Watch NEWS



Saanich Police Community Safety Office

111—3680 Uptown Boulevard

BLOCKWATCH@SAANICHPOLICE.CA

Saanich Police Department

760 Vernon Ave

www.Saanichpolice.ca



Welcome to Block Watch

Block Watch brings police and communities together in their common goal of community safety. Block Watch is an inclusive, community-based program that connects people, builds relationships and creates a strong sense of community. Participating in Block Watch involves being alert to your surroundings, talking to your neighbours, being aware of local crime trends and learning current crime prevention techniques from your local Block Watch office.

When you see something suspicious or witness criminal activity you are asked to safely observe and report what you see to police and share the information with your Block Watch group. Groups can be set up in residential neighbourhoods and multi-family dwellings and complexes.

Municipal Block Watch Programs in British Columbia operate under the governance of the Block Watch Society of BC, an organization that provides direction, training and materials to Coordinators.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
BLOCK WATCH SOCIETY OF BC

- blockwatch.com
- [@bcblockwatch](https://www.facebook.com/bcblockwatch)
- [@bcblockwatch](https://twitter.com/bcblockwatch)







WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Road safety smarts starts with you

Look, Listen and be seen



Be a safe pedestrian



Map it out. Plan your walking route with your parents before you go. Review street names and landmarks.



Road rules. Learn traffic signs and their meaning. Practice following the rules all the time.



Set a good example. Never run across the street. Where possible, cross at intersections with a pedestrian crossing light or marked crosswalk.



Look – both ways. Make sure all vehicles have stopped before crossing the road. Make eye contact with drivers before crossing, even when you have a walk signal.



Listen. Put away all electronic gadgets and ear buds while you're walking. You can hear approaching traffic that may be hard to see.



Be seen. Wear bright clothes and/or reflective gear, especially at night and in poor weather.



Railway crossings. Only cross railway tracks at designated signals or signs and watch your step. Don't play around or on railways.



Parked vehicles. Avoid shortcuts through parking lots or around parked cars. It's harder for people to see you and for you to see them.



More Tips:

Crossing basics: Stop at the curb. Look left and right for oncoming vehicles, then look left over your shoulder for vehicles that might be turning. When the intersection is clear, start crossing and keep looking for approaching vehicles.

Sidewalk/no sidewalk: Walk on the inside edge of the sidewalk away from the road, so you're further away from traffic. If there isn't a sidewalk where you are, walk facing oncoming traffic so you can see approaching vehicles and make eye contact with drivers. Also remember to walk single file.

These 10 tips will help you make safe choices as a pedestrian.

Road Safety and Distracted Driving



We all play a part in making our roads safe — when you're behind the wheel, focus on the road. If everyone in B.C. avoided distractions while driving, around 78 lives could be saved every year. We can make our roads safer together.

If you're looking at your phone you can't see the road!!

Anything that takes your attention away from driving can contribute to distracted driving. Even when stopped, checking an electronic device affects your focus. You're 3.6 times more likely to crash if you're using

Plan ahead to keep your focus on the road

- Turn off your phone or notifications. Consider turning on "silent mode" or "do not disturb" when you first get into the car.
- Keep your phone out of sight and out of mind. Put it in a closed glove box or centre console before you start driving.
- Know where to go before you drive. Program your GPS before you start driving and pull over if you need to update directions.
- Driving will always require your full attention, so set yourself up for zero distractions before you start driving.
- Set realistic travel times and be mindful of rush hours and delays.

#LeaveYourPhoneAlone #EyesFwdBC



When you're distracted you react slower. Most rear-end crashes resulting in injury involve distracted drivers.

Every ticket for distracted driving includes a fine of \$368 and four driver penalty points.



Rules of the road

- Don't use your cellphone at a red light. The law applies even when you're stopped at a red light or in bumper-to-bumper traffic.
- Keep your hands free. Hands-free means a Bluetooth, wired headset or speakerphone that can be operated with one touch or voice commands.
- If you have a Learner's (L) or Novice (N) licence, you are Not allowed to use any electronic devices (like phone or GPS) behind the wheel, for any purpose, even in hands-free mode.

Tips to avoid distracted driving



Focus on the road and your driving. Avoid distractions, especially those associated with electronic devices and display screens.



Keep your phone out of sight and out of mind. Put it in closed glove box or centre console before you start driving.



Messages from the Saanich Police Block Watch Office



Pawtrol Calendars are now available for purchase. Balfour's Friends Foundation (BFF) is a registered charity that provides financial aid for low-income pet owners on Vancouver Island, to help their sick and injured pets receive essential veterinary care and stay together with their families. Every year BFF produces the popular Officers on Pawtrol calendar, featuring police officers from across Greater Victoria posing with their pets. In the brand new 2025 calendar, there are three Saanich Police model volunteers - Insp. Damian Kowalewich with his dog Coco, Staff Sgt. Brad Brajcich with his dog Zyra and Cst. Laura Blain with her dog Minnie.

Calendars are \$20 each incl PST and may be ordered online at <https://balfoursfriends.com/calendars/> Calendars may also be purchased at many Greater Victoria pet stores and veterinary clinic locations between now and late December. Sales locations in Saanich so far include The Bone & Biscuit Co. at Uptown, VCA Canada Feltham Animal Hospital on Shelbourne St. and Paw Space Boutique at Saanich Centre.

On Tuesday, August 27th, one of our amazing volunteers, Bill Turner received the Chief Constable's Community Service Award for his dedication to the Saanich Police and our community. Bill previously served with the Saanich Police in various roles from 1962 to 1974. He is now a leader within our volunteer team and has volunteered over eight hundred hours since 2021. Bill has been instrumental in running our Safe Place, Speed Watch, and Cell Watch programs and has been involved in all our community events. He is also involved in the Badge of Life Program's Peer Support Team and is a Director of the Saanich Police Historical Society. Bill's dedication to community service and volunteer efforts exemplifies the core values of the Saanich Police, earning him this notable award.



"The Community Engagement Division strives to build relationships in our community in a diverse and inclusive manner through education and crime prevention. Our officers connect with community groups such as Saanich schools, LGBTQ2S+ community, older adult population, and culturally diverse organizations. Balancing public safety with meaningful and authentic community connections is something we hope to achieve. Thank you for your involvement, interest, and support in our programs,"

Inspector Damian Kowalewich

INSPECTOR DAMIAN KOWALEWICH
OFFICER IN CHARGE |
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIVISION