

2002 February Auto Crime Awareness Month
Where would you be without your car ... always use an anti-theft device.

February 11, 2002 City of Richmond Council Meeting

Good evening Mayor and Council. The month of February is ICBC's Auto Crime Awareness Month in Richmond and across the Fraser Valley. Thank you for allowing me to appear as a delegation to talk to you about auto crime awareness.

In 2001 there were 683 vehicles reported stolen to ICBC in Richmond. This marks a 1% increase from the year 2000 auto crime statistics and this increase represents a trend that we are seeing across many jurisdictions.

No matter what type of car you drive or where you park, everyone is a potential victim of auto crime. Sgt. Enzo Nadalin of the Auto Theft Task Force has given some of the reasons for our auto theft problem. They include:

- The ease of stealing a car. Most vehicles stolen are 7-10 years old due to weak door locks and ignitions.
- Stolen cars are also a source of income. There is a huge profit potential when cars are stripped down and their parts used to fuel a vast black market.
- Stolen cars are used for joyriding. A vehicle that is stolen by a thief for the sole purpose of experiencing a "roller coaster ride", often end up with the vehicle burnt or dumped into a river.
- Stolen cars are needed to commit other crimes. A stolen car is often a "tool of the trade" for criminals. Stolen cars are found to be used in bank robberies, sex offences, break and enters and the drug trade.

We also want to let people know that thieves will strike anywhere, anytime and will take anything. There is a perception that you are more at risk from having your vehicle stolen from a public parking lot, but the reality is that you are just as vulnerable in front of your house or your driveway. This is why we need to take precautions no matter where we are. It is just as important to remove all valuables and use an anti-theft device whether your vehicle is parked in front of your home or in a parking lot.

During this month's auto theft campaign we will be asking people, "***Where would you be without your vehicle?***". Most people don't think much about the inconvenience of having their vehicle stolen unless it has happened to them. But the reality is that most people rely on their vehicle to get them to work, to the doctor's office, to the grocery store or to school. Without their vehicle their daily lives become much more difficult.

Richmond's auto theft awareness campaign will include a number of initiatives designed to educate and encourage the public to protect themselves from being a victim of auto crime. They include:

- **Lock Out Auto Crime Audit Contest** - Volunteers from all Richmond RCMP community police offices and the Community Volunteer patrol at Riverport / Silvercity will be out in full force during the month of February, patrolling parking lots and leaving Crime Prevention notices on car windshields
- **Direct Mail** - A direct mail campaign to high auto crime areas will take place in early February. The letter will let residents know they are at risk and what precautions they can take to lock out auto crime. These residents will be encouraged to purchase an anti-theft device and can enter a contest to win back the cost of such a device (up to \$200) if they mail in their proof of purchase.

- Posters and auto crime prevention literature will be available throughout the community and at the two ICBC Claim Centres, Driver Service Centers, Malls, etc. As well, auto theft prevention ads will be placed in local Richmond papers.

In conclusion, auto crime is not a problem that is going to be cured overnight. It is a problem big enough for all of us to get involved. An emphasis on prevention is required from the City, the local business community, the police, the judicial system, and the residents of Richmond – we all have to take responsibility for the problem and do our part.

In fact, our Auto Crime Awareness campaign directly supports the City's Community Safety Division's long term goal of "[a] community where everyone takes responsibility for the safety of people and property".

To this end, I ask for Council's support for and commitment to our auto crime awareness campaign. As well, I urge Council to continue the use of safety conscious planning when reviewing future building applications so that preventative measures to reduce crime such as "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)" are used.

I also request the members of Council to share the information you have received tonight to all your contacts and encourage the residents of Richmond to prevent themselves from being a victim of auto crime.

Thank you for your continued support in raising awareness in the fight against auto crime in the City of Richmond.