



OKOTOKS AREA RANGE PATROL AND CRIME WATCH ASSOCIATION



The Okotoks Area Range Patrol and Crime Watch Association was established in 2004 from an amalgamation of The Okotoks Range Patrol Association, one of the first Rural Crime Watch organizations established in Alberta dating back to 1980, and DeWinton Rural Crime Watch Association. By joining forces, the eyes and ears of the rural community now encompasses over 270 square miles around the Okotoks area. One of many Rural Crime Watch Associations in Alberta, The Okotoks Area Range Patrol and Crime Watch Association is a non-profit society sponsored by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Farmer's Advocate Office, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Western Stock Growers, Natural Resources (formerly known as Fish and Wildlife) and the Department of Justice.

Our membership consists of volunteer residents in their respective areas who keep a watchful eye on the suspicious activities and movements of criminals operating in the rural area. These activities are reported to the R.C.M.P. and Natural Resources. And it takes very little of your personal time, since most of what you do is done as you carry on your every day activities. The benefits are that crime is least likely to occur in an area where people are alert to the potential for crime.

Other membership responsibilities might include search and rescue, such as lost children and hunters, or alerting residents of disasters.

CRIME IN THE RURAL COMMUNITY

As the City of Calgary grows closer to our community and our population grows, crime grows with it. Our members need to be more alert and knowledgeable than ever to assist the Okotoks R.C.M.P. detachment. The new Deerfoot extension has the potential to allow crime to get a strong hold in our community. We can't allow that to happen.

Typical crimes committed include break and enters (B & E's) into residences, farm buildings, garages, and machine shops; theft of property, valuables, merchandise and liquor; joy riding and dumping of stolen vehicles; vandalizing and stealing mail boxes; illegal use of firearms, and illegal hunting and fishing.

Rural crime is costing the community millions of dollars every year. These costs are reflected not only in the loss of property, but in higher insurance premiums, replacement and/or repair of equipment, lost production time for farmers and ranchers, and depletion of precious fish and wildlife resources and habitats.

We all want to live in a safe community and maintain the quality of country life that we have come to expect. Membership in this organization is invaluable.

CRIME WATCH MEETINGS

An Executive Committee has been formed by the Okotoks Area Range Patrol and Crime Watch Association to coordinate communications between the R.C.M.P. and its members. The Executive typically holds monthly meetings to address crime concerns in the area, strategize to increase membership, and find creative ways to continually educate the membership on crime prevention.

The Okotoks Area Range Patrol and Crime Watch Association holds two general meetings per year for its membership, one in the spring and the other in the fall. These meetings are held in conjunction with a continuing education seminar presented by guest speakers knowledgeable on crime prevention. All members and potential new members are encouraged to attend these informative seminars which are free of charge.

BENEFITS PROVIDED BY MEMBERSHIP

- Rural Crime Watch signage is provided to each new member to post in conspicuous locations as an aid to deter criminal activity. Potential thieves or vandals become aware that the community is alert and working together to prevent crime. The more signs, the greater the deterrent.
- Your name and phone number is also added to our autodialer fan-out telephone system to automatically update you of any concerns occurring in your area or if a general announcement is needed. If you prefer, email can be substituted for the telephone contact system, although a 24-48 hour delay may occur as this is entered manually by our volunteers.
- A zone coordinator, with contact number, is assigned to each member and is available to address any concerns the membership may have. This is especially important to expedite a fan-out regarding a crime. A list of Executive officers is also provided.
- Continuing education courses, including guest speakers at the two general meetings, are provided as they become available. If there are any specific topics you wish to see covered, we encourage you to contact your zone coordinator.
- Tack identification (stamping) for theft prevention and property return is available at all general meetings and during advertised special events.
- Some home-owner insurance policies will provide a discount to members of crime prevention organizations. If your policy is held with one of them, the executive will send a letter directly to your insurance company acknowledging you to be a member in good standing. If your membership status should change for any reason, we will forward the status change to the insurance company.
- Property protection techniques are available through the R.C.M.P. Detachment in Okotoks. Ask your zone coordinator how these techniques can be implemented.
- Okotoks Area Range Patrol and Crime Watch Association is a registered charity with Revenue Canada and valuable tax receipts will be provided for any donations made to the Association.