



OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

Crime Prevention for Seniors



Safety in our city

Ottawa is regarded by many as one of the safest cities in the world, but that's no reason for seniors to let their guard down. While the Ottawa Police Service will always be available to respond to crime, we need your active participation to help prevent crime. We can't do it alone — get informed, get involved and make crime prevention part of your everyday life. Together, we can continue to build a safer Ottawa for all.

Would you know what to do if...?

- You were asked to pay for something that you “won”?
- A suspicious stranger came to your door?
- You arrived home and found your door or window open?
- A member of your own family or a caregiver left you feeling threatened?
- Incidents of vandalism or graffiti were on the rise in your neighbourhood?
- A so-called bank official asked for your credit card information over the phone?

This is just a small sample of the concerns expressed by Ottawa seniors. The following information provides a good start for raising awareness about crime prevention issues specific to seniors. Contact your local Community Police Centre or visit the Ottawa Police Web site at www.ottawapolice.ca for additional crime prevention tips.

Stay safe — be alert

- Be street smart — be aware of your surroundings and know who's around you. Be wary of isolated spots, like basements, laundry rooms and parking lots.

- Always try to walk in well-lit areas and try not to walk alone. Ask a family member or a neighbour to escort you.
- Know what constitutes elder abuse. Whether it is physical, sexual, financial or mental abuse or neglect, these actions are crimes and help is available to you.
- Make sure your home is not an easy target for criminals. See the pamphlet called *Crime Prevention at Home* and take advantage of Ottawa Police's **Home Security Inspection Program** where, at your request, police representatives will visit your home (house, condo, apartment, etc.) to provide a free safety audit — assessing ways to make your home safer.
- Get involved in Neighbourhood Watch — it's one of the best ways to meet your neighbours and make your community safer.
- If you come home and see a door ajar or a window broken, call the police immediately. NEVER enter the dwelling.
- **Above all, trust your gut feeling.** If your instincts tell you that another person's actions are threatening or an environment is unsafe, then leave or call for help immediately. If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy, remove yourself!

Your money

When it comes to your money, be particularly alert. Crimes like fraud are on the increase in our city, and it's up to all of us to be on the lookout for criminals and con games. For your protection:

- Arrange for direct deposit of any cheques you may regularly receive by mail.

- Never provide personal information like bank account or credit card numbers over the phone.
- Give only to charities you know.
- Never rush into something involving your money or property. Always check out offers with friends and family first.
- Be wary of something for nothing or get rich quick schemes. Never turn over large sums of money to anybody, especially a stranger, no matter how promising the deal looks.
- If pressured by a salesperson, refuse to be bullied and say no thanks — walk away, close the door, hang up the phone — it's your right.
- Do not hesitate to check the credentials of a salesperson or public official.
- Always get a second estimate.
- Know that your signature is negotiable — only sign contracts or cheques after you're certain it's for a legitimate reason. If in doubt, check with a friend, lawyer, accountant or the police.
- Report all suspicious offers or activities to the police immediately.

What to do...

If you or a senior you know is a victim of crime — from a stolen purse to an assault — report it to the police immediately. If you suspect a fraud — again, report it to the police immediately. If possible write down any important information while it's still fresh in your memory. If you have any questions or concerns about safety or want to get actively involved in crime prevention, contact your local Community Police Centre.

See the “Red Pages” in the Ottawa telephone directory or visit the Police Web site at www.ottawapolice.ca for a full list of Ottawa Police services and contact information.



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Make the Right Call!

Every call is important, but not all calls are life-threatening, and not all calls are police emergencies. Whatever the case, we're here to help. You have a role to play: “Make the Right Call.”

9-1-1

Life-threatening emergency
or crime in progress

230-6211

TTY 232-1123

Other emergencies

236-1222

Community Police Centres
and all other enquiries

