BLOCK WATCH

Lost/Stolen Licence Plates

Theft from motor vehicle is a common crime of opportunity that can happen fast and at any time of the day. All valuables should be removed from vehicles, however, licence plates are not something we can remove from our vehicles. Aside from mischief, your licence plate can be stolen and used for various reasons.

Reasons to Steal a Licence Plate:

- **To Disguise a Stolen Vehicle:** Criminals may steal a vehicle and then steal a plate from a vehicle that resembles the stolen one. This way the licence plate will match the vehicle description. The car will go undetected as stolen until the owner realizes their plate has been stolen and files a police report.

- **To Commit Other Crimes:** If a thief is looking to commit crimes that require a car, they will sometimes steal a licence plate first. Criminals will then use the car to commit a crime. If a witness provides police with a licence plate number, it won't connect them to the crime.

- **To Commit Traffic Violations:** If a criminal is driving around with your licence plate on their car, they can commit traffic offences and may not get caught. If they speed, run red lights, or violate parking restrictions, fines may be mailed to you as the registered owner of the licence plate.

Reporting Lost/Stolen Licence Plates:

- Report it as soon as you notice it missing from your vehicle. Call 911 if you see someone actively removing a licence plate from a vehicle that doesn't belong to them.

- Call the non-emergency number of the municipality where it was lost/stolen *(Ex: I reverse my car into the parking stall at work so I knew my plate was on my car when I left work and could safely say it was stolen in Port Coquitlam between 5:00 PM & 8:30 PM).*

- The call taker will ask for your personal details and vehicle information along with a few questions to help determine if it was lost/stolen *(Ex: In my case, the dealership cover was on the ground but the screws and plate were gone, indicating it was most likely stolen).*

- Obtain a police file number so that when you are driving to replace your licence plates so you have it available if you are pulled over by police.

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What else do I need to do?

- There will be an $18.00 charge to replace your lost or stolen licence plates. By securing your plates you can hopefully avoid this cost. New insurance papers will be provided, so make sure to remove your financial information sheet from the rest of your insurance paperwork and store it at home.
- Ensure if you have any registered work parking passes or parking services where your licence plate is kept on file that you update the information.
- Check out ICBC.com for more information on replacing a licence plate.

Options for Securing your Licence Plates:

Bell/Anti-Theft Chrome Licence Plate Fastener. Use the unique screws that only the included tool can take on and off ($4 for 2, need two sets to cover both plates).

Locking/Stainless Nut/Bolt Fasteners with allen key tool; similar to the Chrome but a little more cost effective ($4-$7 range).

Fastener Caps for licence plate screws, come in a variety of material to match your vehicle and offer a level or protection from screw drivers ($2-$4).

- Other options that may not be available in stores but can be found on the internet include a full protective shell casing for your vehicle's licence plate.
- You can use a combination of screws so that the front and back are different and potentially use one of each type of screw on each licence plate to really make them difficult to steal.
- Bring your own screws/tools to the insurance place with you as not all of them supply these items for you.
- **Check your licence plates regularly!**

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