

COTTAGE AND SEASONAL HOME SECURITY

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) would like to remind cottage owners that seasonal properties are most vulnerable to thieves during the winter months.

Recently the OPP informed the public of several break and enters and thefts in Frontenac Township area. The break and enters, theft of trailers, All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and mischief to property centre around seasonal cottages. Police have conducted patrols of the surrounding cottages but would encourage owners to verify that their cottage are still secure and not damaged.

Throughout the off season routine checks on your cottages are highly encouraged. If you are not able to attend, reaching out to someone you trust to check on your property is another option. As you conduct regular checks, it tells people passing by that the cottage is being regularly checked (leaves tire impressions or foot prints on your property).

The Frontenac County OPP with the assistance of members from neighbouring detachments, Scenes of Crime Officers (SOCO), Forensic Identification Services (FIS) and the East Region Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU) will continue to investigate these incidents.

The OPP have some crime prevention tips for closing and winterizing their seasonal properties:

Mark your property. This will help to discourage the theft of valuables by facilitating the identification of stolen property. The idea is to engrave valuables with an identifying number in a highly visible spot. OPP recommends using your Driver's Licence or vehicle licence plate number as your personal Identification number.

- Use quality locks on windows, doors and sheds and make sure they are in good repair before leaving for the season.
- Close window curtains and blinds and put up shutters.
- Remove all food and alcohol.
- Stow away little things like water sports equipment and propane tanks.
- Take valuables with you - electronics, personal items and tools.
- Remove all firearms or weapons.
- Shut down Wi-Fi.
- Attempt to make the property look lived in with lamps on timers and having exterior lights with a motion sensor.
- Get to know your neighbours who have permanent homes in the area and ask if they check the property and keep them up to date if you plan to have maintenance done by a contractor.
- Look around and remove any objects that could be used to break into your property.
- Consider a home security system or a trail camera installed at access points outside the residence.

- Ensure that contact (key holder) information is made available for alarms, thefts and water damage.
- If motorized vehicles remain on the property make sure they are locked in a shed or building, covered, battery removed and keys taken with you.
- Installing large reflective numbers on your home and/or garage makes it easier for police and other emergency services to identify your home in the event of an emergency.

Being proactive in the safety and security of your property is always time well spent.

If you have any information in relation to these occurrences, please call Sharbot Lake OPP or Frontenac OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Should you wish to remain anonymous, you may call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward of up to \$2,000 or you can submit a tip to Crime Stoppers at www.ontariocrimestoppers.ca.