



# Spring Safety Tips



Spring is now upon us. As the days get longer and temperatures get warmer, many will flock towards outdoor activities. With these activities come hazards we need to be prepared and aware of.

The following reminders will help keep spring activities safe and fun for all:

## Protecting your Home and Property

- Keep doors locked at all times. If you are working in the backyard, keep your front and garage doors closed and locked. Keep doors locked when you leave, even if it's only for a few minutes.
- With warmer weather, many people open windows or sliding glass doors while they are at home. Remember to close and lock windows and sliding doors when you go to bed or leave.
- When not in use, put all ladders, lawn care equipment and tools back into a secure storage area. Do not forget to secure recreational items such as bicycles and sports equipment when they are not in use. Always lock any storage unit or shed where property is stored.
- Be aware of home improvement scams. If you did not solicit the contractor or salesman who shows up at your door unannounced, do not do business with that person and notify your local police if necessary.
- If a Utilities representative comes to your house, request identification. True representatives have identification that should be viewable. Call their company for verification if necessary.
- No one knows your neighborhood better than you, be aware of your surroundings and watch out for your neighbours. Having an involved and watchful community is one of the best crime prevention resources available.

## Tips for the Gardener

- Prevent theft of hanging baskets by using lockable hanging baskets. Alternative options include using plastic cable ties which can be wrapped around the basket chain hook or use a padlock and clamp the hook on the chain onto the bracket.
- Make newly planted trees or shrubs more difficult to steal by using plant anchors specifically designed to anchor trees and shrubs.

## Scooter, Bike, In-line Skating and Skateboard Safety

- Wear appropriate safety gear. Wrist, elbow and knee pads that do not interfere with movement. Comfortable, properly fitted helmets should sit level on top of the head, not rocking in any direction and not interfering with vision or hearing – always fasten the safety strap.
- Know how to stop properly. Come to a complete stop before entering driveways, paths or sidewalks. Look left, right and left again for bikes, cars or pedestrians heading in your path.
- On in-line skates or skateboards, know how to fall safely. Bend your knees and get down low. Try to fall sideways, not backwards or head first. Try to land on your shoulder and roll. Fall onto your pads. Kick the board out from under your feet.

## Yard Work Safety

- Survey your lawn before mowing to ensure it is free of debris or objects that can cause injury. Never operate a mower in your bare feet and avoid wearing loose clothing. Never start a mower indoors. When refueling your mower, make sure the engine is off and cool. Don't spill gasoline on a hot engine. Never leave your mower unattended. Don't use electrical mowers on wet grass.
- Inspect equipment and tools before each use – do not use if damaged. Read the equipment owner's manuals and operate them according to instructions and only for the job they were engineered to do. Unplug all power tools when not in use and don't leave tools unattended or allow children or inexperienced adults to operate them. Use proper eye protection. Make sure blade guards are in place on all cutting equipment.
- If excavating, "call before you dig" - BC One Call 1-800-474-6886 to eliminate the risk of accidents where digging or excavation.

## Ladder Safety

- Read the manufacturer's instructions that come with the ladder. They contain guidelines for weight and height limits as well as for proper use.
- Inspect the ladder before using it to make sure there are no loose or broken rungs.
- Make sure the ladder is the right height for the job. Never stand on a ladder's bucket shelf.
- Make sure the ladder is completely open, and that all of its feet are planted on a firm, level surface.
- Extension ladders should not be placed at an angle that is too extreme.
- Face the ladder when climbing down and make sure your weight is centered between the two sides.