

# DCA Safety Sub – Committee Community Safety Handbook

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## Safety & Security in Dalhousie Ward

The top three safety issues facing our community are: *drug dealing, prostitution and break-ins*.

This special Safety Pamphlet, sponsored by the office of Councillor Diane Holmes, is designed as a guide to provide advice to residents on how to safely address the key safety concerns that affect many Dalhousie Ward residents. Most importantly, it contains the contact information for the many resources available to you in your community. Be part of the solution – get empowered, get involved!

*DCA Safety Sub-Committee Executive*



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Dear Residents,

I continue to work on addressing the concerns that were brought forward at the Community Safety Meeting held on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2005. There is a need for a coordinated co-operative approach when dealing with issues such as safety, because these issues have a profound effect on neighbourhoods. When working to meet the needs of the community it is important to include all voices, including those of residents, local businesses, or City departments.

One of the key points of action that resulted from this meeting was the decision to create a Community Safety Committee. As was discussed at the meeting this committee falls under the auspices of the Dalhousie Community Association. For those of you who have a desire to sit on this committee, please contact my office and I will gladly forward your name to the DCA for inclusion.

I would also like to stress the importance of continued persistence when calling in complaints, whether it is to the City's 3-1-1 number or Ottawa Police Services. It is imperative for you to include as much detail as possible (i.e. addresses, descriptions, times and locations). Only through persistence can we maintain safe, healthy neighbourhoods.

Sincerely,



## Community Resources

### Police

Life-threatening Emergency or Crime in Progress	9-1-1
Community Police Centres and all other inquiries	613-236-1222
TTY: (text telephone for the hearing impaired)	613-232-1123
Centretown Community Police Centre (non-emergency)	613-236-1222, ext. 5804

### Fire/Ambulance

Emergency	9-1-1
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### Ottawa Public Health Information (OPHI)

New Telephone Number	613-580-OPHI (6744)
TTY: (text telephone for the hearing impaired)	613-580-9656

### General Inquiries

Call Centre 7am – 7pm	3-1-1 (580-2400)
TTY (text telephone for the hearing impaired)	613-580-2407

### Please call the 3-1-1 to report violations related to these subject matters

- Sidewalk and Street Maintenance
- Noise
- Parks and Sports Fields
- Parking
- Property Standards

### By-Law Enforcement

Call Centre: 7:00 am- 7:00 pm	3-1-1
After 7:00 pm call:	613-580-2424 ext 41547

### OC Transpo

Transit Information	613-741-4390
Para Transpo Information	613-244-7272

### Community Centres

Dalhousie Community Centre	613-564-1188
Jack Purcell Community Centre	613-564-1050
McNabb Community Centre	613-564-1070

### Community Health Centres

Somerset West Community Health Centre	613-238-8210
Centretown Community Health Centre	613-233-0651

### Recreation Centres

Plant Pool Recreation Centre	613-232-3000
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### Agencies

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments	613-230-6700
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## Community Safety Testimonials

***Pamela Connolly – Chair DCA Safety Sub Committee and, Louisa, Lebreton, Arlington, Bell (L.L.A.B) Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.***

In the summer of 2005, prostitution invaded our section of Centretown. As a result, the trolling Prostitutes and Johns disrupted our lives as they worked close to our homes and families.

We were constantly cleaning up condoms and syringes, and as well our lives were constantly interrupted by the loud noise of the sex trade workers, working just outside our windows. Following a large community meeting in October 2005, we decided to become part of the Neighbourhood Watch.

We have grown to over thirty strong in our watch and now know more many more neighbours than we did before. Empowered by our numbers we do not, as a group, hesitate to report our concerns to the police. Things feel safer now and we are determined to see the drug dealers, who feed the sex trade, gone from our neighbourhood.

***Stephanie Strudwick – Lebreton Flats Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator***

The wind was blowing so hard that mid-February winter morning – the mailman down at the corner of Lorne and Albert streets had to empty the contents of the mailbox with an awkward amount of extra care. As I made my way past him towards downtown, I glanced back towards his precarious situation, amid the howling gusts and dire cold, it never occurred to me that for the first time in five years my little home was about to be breached and robbed.

My front door was kicked in, in broad daylight and in plain view. No one witnessed a thing.

According to police reports, we were averaging a break-in every day and a half between 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM from Monday to Friday. In total there were about 20 such break-ins. By the speed of the intrusions and what was taken in most of the robberies, it can be assumed that in all likelihood the motive was money for drugs.

With support from neighbours, police, and the DCA's Safety Sub - Committee, we set up the Lebreton Flats Neighbourhood Watch with some 120 members. This watch is third such Neighbourhood Watch to spring up in this area as a direct result of recent crime problems. The word has traveled quickly among neighbours, from street to street and from friend to friend, and neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and the message is clear! We all want safe streets on which to live and raise our families. There is no longer a place for crime in our neighbourhood, or the neighbourhoods adjacent to our own.

So, how can you make a difference? Keep informed by coming out to the monthly DCA Safety Sub - Committee meetings. Where you can hear first hand what safety issues the police are targeting right here in your neighbourhood – and what role you can play in helping them. Join your local Neighbourhood Watch, or start your own. Contact your local MPP and voice your support of the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*, this legislation is already in place in some other Canadian provinces and territories. Work with me, and others like me, to keep Dalhousie Ward the place of 'choice' to live and call home.

## Community Safety Programs & Resources



### Community Safety Audit – Women’s Initiatives for Safer Environments

Safety audits help people evaluate how safe a physical environment feels, and identify changes that would make it safer for everyone who uses it. During a safety audit, people walk throughout a space, noticing what feels safe and what does not.

The safety audit checklist encourages them to consider things like:

- What is the lighting like?
- Can I see what's up ahead?
- Can I get help if needed?
- Are there hiding places?

The Findings from these audits form the basis of an action plan to make the area safer.

Safety Audits have many benefits. They lead to tangible improvements in the safety of the area audited. Safer environments reduce the opportunity for violent or threatening behaviours. If a space feels safe, it also attracts more people, and busy places are safer.

They are an excellent opportunity for people to share their experiences of feeling vulnerable. This reduces isolation and helps those responsible for a facility respond to the concerns of users.

The experience of being listened to and seeing change (no matter how small) builds confidence and increases individual’s sense of control over their lives.

Participants in a safety audit learn about their physical environments, the others who share the space and the impact of violence on women and other vulnerable groups.

Safety audits are a fun and effective way to build a sense of community.

On the evening of Wednesday, March 29th, Councillor Diane Holmes, Constable Art Wong, three Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, as well as other concerned community members arrived at the Dalhousie Community Centre to take part in a safety audit of Somerset St. from Bronson to Preston.

On our audit we noted many things, such as broken signage, poor lighting, a lack of trees along the south side, considerable amounts of litter between commercial and residential buildings and along the adjacent alley and laneways.

WISE also conducted an audit of Lebreton, Louis, Bell and Arlington Streets, and currently the appropriate stakeholders are rectifying their respective deficiencies, as outlined in the report.

If you know of some areas where you have safety concerns (i.e. dark littered allies, unlit streets), you can request a free safety audit of that area/street. You can visit the WISE website at [www.wiseottawa.ca](http://www.wiseottawa.ca) or call 230-6700 to find out more



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

## Ottawa Police Home Security Inspections

To help better protect your home, the Ottawa Police Service offer a free Home Security Inspection Program. A specially trained police representative will go through your home and perform the safety audit – assessing and informing you on ways to make your home safer and less attractive to burglars.



To arrange an appointment with the Home Security Inspections Program, contact Constable Tim Senack, at 236-1222 ext. 5871 (Mon. to Fri. between Noon to 4 PM).

Constable Senack is also the contact for Operation Identification; this program allows you to borrow engravers to mark your property with your driver's license number thus making your property uniquely identifiable in the event that you are robbed.

## Neighbourhood Watch

Joining or starting a Neighbourhood Watch in your community is one of the best ways to empower your neighbourhood. This program thrives on mutual aid.

Your neighbours know who you are, what type of car you drive and accordingly may be one of the first

people to notice a suspicious person at your door or window. When neighbours work together, they can combat crime in their area in the most effective way – prevention. To join a watch or to set one up on your street contact your local Community Police Centre.



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Ottawa Salus Corporation offers rehabilitation services, community support services, and housing to men and women with mental health problems. Salus Corporation has been an active member of our Neighbourhood Watch, and is dedicated to building community among its tenants, within our community and within the greater Ottawa area.

### **Safety Sub - Committee - Safety Tips**

The following are a list of tips that we the executive of the Safety Sub- Committee endorse and employ in our respective homes and neighbourhoods.

- 1. Keep your outside lights on at night.**
- 2. Put on an inside light and radio when you are away in the evening.**
- 3. Always lock ground floor windows and doors.**
- 4. Get to know your immediate neighbours, have a buddy system for mail and newspaper pick-up when you are away.**
- 5. Do not put personal identified items in the recycling or the garbage. Shred them!**
- 6. Pick up litter in front of your own house or apartment regularly.**
- 7. Report rundown or neglected properties to the City's By-law services.**
- 8. Join or start a Neighbourhood Watch in your community.**
- 9. Have an Ottawa Police Services Representative conduct a safety audit in your house or apartment it's free!**
- 10. Get involved in the Community Safety Committee. Contact the Councillor's Office to find out how!**
- 11. Consider a Safety Audit for your neighbourhood. Contact the Women's Initiative for Safer Environments.**
- 12. Do not hesitate to call the Ottawa Police Services when you have concerns about suspicious activities, addresses or vehicles.**

## Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act

“On any block and in any neighbourhood, it only takes one house that is harbouring illegal activities to undermine the safety of all residents of that community and affect the property values throughout that neighbourhood.”

### *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, Province of Saskatchewan*

#### **Why?**

Help empower residents of neighbourhoods across the province by pressing our provincial MPPs for new *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* legislation – which is already in place in some other Canadian provinces/territories.

#### **What is it?**

Unlike criminal law where someone must be charged by police with a specific offence and that criminal activity must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* is a civil law with more flexibility and based on an investigative team’s documented findings of a balance of probabilities. It directly targets the landowners of buildings where suspected unlawful activities are taking place (i.e. often space is rented to accommodate crack houses, booze cans, places promoting prostitution et cetera). This new law will make the landowners accountable.

#### **How does it work?**

In brief, it is based on complainant anonymity (similar to Crime Stoppers); a

call is placed to a 1-800 number where the suspected address is reported to a dedicated team of provincially governed investigators. If investigated, a decision will be made as to whether the building should be shut down. The law is designed to suppress favourable conditions conducive to criminal activity, and to make the criminals who perpetuate the on-going unlawful activity increasingly uneasy and uncomfortable in the neighbourhoods where concerned community groups are becoming increasingly active and vigilant.

#### **How can you help?**

What can you do to help bring this legislation here to Ontario? Make your voice heard by contacting our Premier and local MPPs. Tell them it is time for Ontario to adopt the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*. Make the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* your mandate, your law.

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