

Neighbourhood Support

New Zealand



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Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

Serial Number Recording – a wise precaution

Dishonesty offending amounts to around 60 per cent of reported crime and includes burglaries and thefts from vehicles. The goods most attractive to burglars and thieves, sometimes referred to as “hot property”, are usually small, valuable, easily taken and concealed, and easily disposed of because they are popular and sought after, e.g. jewellery, tools, CD and DVD players, CDs and DVDs, iPod and other MP3 players, mobile phones, handheld and laptop computers, game consoles and video games, digital and video cameras.

Police recover thousands of dollars worth of stolen property every year. Unfortunately many items can not be returned because the owners did not record the serial numbers or mark the property so it could be identified as belonging to them. Worse still, the property may have to be left with the thief.

People who are able to provide the serial numbers of stolen goods to police have a much greater chance of having items returned. Some insurance companies waive the no claim excess for clients who are able to provide serial number records when they report a loss.

There are a number of ways you can identify your property. These include engraving valuable property with your driver’s licence number and making photographic records of property that can’t be engraved. Police suggest keeping valuation certificates or purchase receipts and descriptions of your property in a safe place for future reference.

In some places, Police and Neighbourhood Support are promoting “Operation SNAP” (Serial Number Action Project). This is an initiative of the Insurance Council of New Zealand and the Police, and also involves some secondhand dealers and property recording companies. The initiative aims to increase the recording of serial numbers and other particulars of property.



When you have engraved your valuable property in your home or recorded the serial numbers of items, Neighbourhood Support

can provide you with a WARNING sticker to put on a window. This helps reduce the risk of burglary because criminals know they face a much greater risk of getting caught or traced if they handle and attempt to sell identifiable goods.

There are several businesses offering to record serial numbers, take photographs and store valuable identifying information. This may be a good option for some people.

You can also make your own property record. This is the kind of information you need to record: item, make, model, serial number, colour, identifying features, date purchased, where purchased, price paid, identifying number (driver's licence).