

Mounties urge smartphone owners to get informed about the CWTA's stolen cellphone blacklist

On Oct 1st, 2013 the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA) launched a stolen cellphone blacklist program that aims to address the problem of smartphone theft by making blacklisted smartphones useless to the criminals who steal them.

"The blacklist program is a great tool for smartphone owners and bad news for smartphone thieves," said Cpl. Jamie Chung. "But we've found that many people don't really understand how the program works and what they have to do to make the program a success. That message needs to get out so smartphone owners can protect themselves."

The Coquitlam RCMP encourages all smartphone owners to read and follow these tips and to pass this information around to other smartphone owners.

What every cellphone owner needs to know about the CWTA Stolen Cellphone Blacklist

How does the blacklist work

- Lost or stolen smartphones are added to the blacklist by cellphone service providers when the device's owner reports the device loss or theft and provides the device's IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity).
- The IMEI number is a unique code that identifies a device to a service network.
- The service provider adds the device's IMEI to the blacklist. The device is then blocked and cannot be reactivated by any service provider that is participating in the blacklist program.
- The blacklist will only cover phones reported stolen from September 30th onward.
- Once a phone is reported lost or stolen it can take up to 48 hours for the IMEI to appear on the list.
- Participating Canadian carriers: Bell, Rogers, Telus and Wind.
- Participating US carriers: AT&T and T-Mobile

What to do right now

- Find your device's 15-digit IMEI by:
 - Dialing *#06#.
 - Checking your device's batter cavity if it is accessible.
 - Checking the base and sides of your device's original packaging.
- Save the number in a safe place outside of your device. For instance, in a computer-based password protection program.



What to do if your qualifying device gets stolen

- You must call your **local police** to report the crime **and** your **service provider** to report the IMEI. The police cannot report your IMEI to your service provider.
- When you call your service provider to report the theft, you will be asked for the device's IMEI.
- If you cannot provide the IMEI, the device cannot be added to the blacklist and may be reactivated.

What to do if you are considering buying a used smartphone

- The best protection is to buy used phones from a reputable vendor.
- If you choose to buy a used device from an individual, you can make sure you are not buying a stolen device by checking the device's IMEI at www.protectyourdata.ca

This program is administered by CWTA, for more information please contact your cell phone provider.