

## Cleanup Crew Welcomes All!



Have you ever thought why you feel uncomfortable and unsafe while walking or driving in a shabby-looking neighbourhood with buildings covered with graffiti and streets littered with garbage? Your gut feeling tells you: local residents stopped caring for this area and it is most likely ridden with crime. Your feelings do not deceive you.

It has been proven by numerous criminology studies and is now called the Broken Window Theory. Signs of decay in a neighbourhood make residents withdraw from public life which in turn gives rise to street crime. That is why keeping Hastings Sunrise clean and tidy is one of the top priorities for the Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre (HSCPC).

“We go graffiti scouting every week,” says HSCPC Program Coordinator Tommy Luong. A group of volunteers equipped with paints and cleaning

supplies walk along Hastings Street washing off tags or painting them over.

“For example, in 2018 we removed 678 tags,” Tommy notes. “Our graffiti team also reported 711 sites to the city or other contractors to paint over.” And since graffiti vandalism is a crime in Vancouver and property owners are responsible for removing the tags, the volunteers’ efforts are always appreciated by the local businesses.

Every other Saturday, the HSCPC holds community cleanups. Volunteers, often joined by people living in the area, pick up garbage from the streets near the community policing office. “Everyone is welcome,” Tommy says. Local residents willing to keep their neighbourhood clean as well as high school students collecting their volunteer hours do not need to go through the extensive volunteer recruitment process.

“All they need is just to call the office (604-717-3584) and sign up for the next

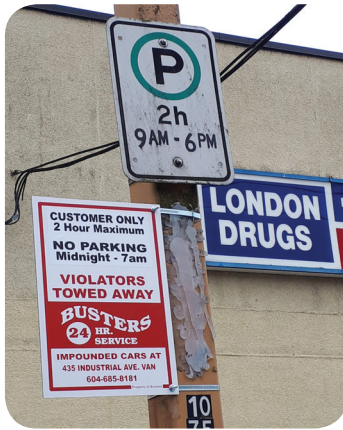
date that suits them,” he explains. “They fill out a community participant form and are ready to go.” Teenagers under 18 need a parent to sign the waiver for them.

The HSCPC volunteers clean parks and playgrounds in the area, collect disposed needles and assist residents who want their blocks of streets to be cleaned. “We provide gloves, tongs and garbage bags to anyone who needs them,” says Tommy.

As supervisor of the Business Safety Team at the HSCPC, he plans to invite companies working in Hastings Sunrise to take part in a major cleanup this spring. “We will set up our tent beside No Frills store at the intersection of Clark Drive and Hastings Street. We hope that the local businesses will join us and together we will pay attention to an area that we do not cover very often,” Tommy adds.

■ *Olga Shaporenko*

# Hastings Sunrise Changes



# Green Thumb Burglars!

Spring weather means the start of lawn care, gardening – and the threat of the Green Thumb Burglar.

That's the guy (or gal) who notices you being busy working outside the front of your house and guesses that you just might have left the back doors unlocked and the house empty. In minutes, the burglar can get in and out with cash or other valuables before you have finished mowing that lawn or planting those flowers.

It's a good idea to close and lock any doors and windows that are out of your direct vision when you spend time outside your house. The minor inconvenience of keeping a back door locked can save you the major inconvenience of replacing stolen property!



For more tips on staying safe visit the VPD website at [Vancouver.ca/police](http://Vancouver.ca/police)

## LIBRARY TO RE-OPEN

The Hastings branch of the Vancouver Public Library is set to re-open this spring after renovations to the roof are completed.

After 30 years, the roof needed to be replaced, bringing about a temporary closure while the concrete was hammered out and the new membrane laid. Phil Hall, Hastings branch head, explained that once the final re-opening date is set, information will be published on the VPL website (<https://www.vpl.ca/>) and a week of events set up to welcome Hastings Sunrise residents back to this hub in our community.

## PAY TO PARK

Many residents and businesses are aware of the implementation of paid parking along four blocks of East Hastings street and some adjoining streets. The city of Vancouver installed the meters with the rationale that, by creating a limit on the time cars can park in these areas, more drivers can use the parking over the course of the day; this in turn will potentially mean more business for local vendors as more customers can visit stores in the area. Currently rates are set at \$1 per hour.

## NEW TIME LIMIT

More parking changes are afoot with the East Village parking lot in the 2500 block of Franklin. A time limit of two hours maximum parking will be implemented along with a ban on overnight parking.

Patricia Barnes of East Village BIA says that the changes are necessary to prevent cars being abandoned in the lot, to minimize garbage problems, and to discourage people from using the lot as a “park and ride” by dropping off their vehicle in the lot and then commuting into the downtown core.

Feedback from the public on changes should be directed to the city either by using the VanConnect app <https://vancouver.ca/vanconnect-desktop.aspx> or by calling 311.

■ **Loretta Revoczi**

## Working together for a safe community

The Hastings Sunrise Community Policing Centre works in partnership with the Vancouver Police Department



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