



This may be a surprise that we are putting out another Newsletter so soon, but I thought that I would take the chance to get a woman's perspective and some advice around Rural Policing from a colleague I work with who herself is a rural woman.

Constable Jenny Buck has been working with us for nearly six months. She has been invaluable with her advice and knowledge of the rural community. Jenny will soon be going back to frontline duties, hence my getting her input to the newsletter before she leaves our group.

Sergeant Mike Porter

From a woman's perspective

Most women living rurally have a wide range of skills, often busy raising a family with day to day work on the farm, managing the household and for some of you having a job off the farm as well!

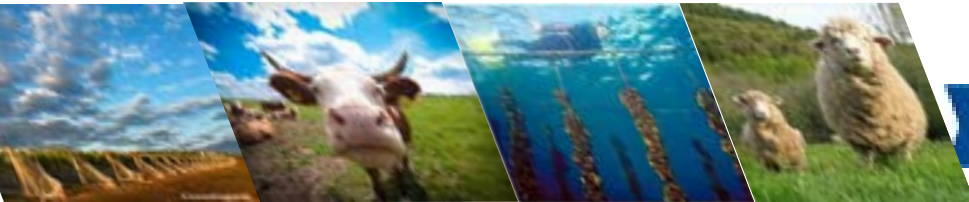
Here are a few tips that may help keep you safe and prevent crime happening to you and your family.

• **Protect Yourself**

Police can and will respond to rural crime, but keep in mind they may need to travel long distances to get to you. Think about some precautions you can take. I think we've all been guilty of leaving keys in vehicles and houses unlocked and take it for granted that you're safe because of where you live.

Right: Jenny with her dog dressed up for a Women's Refuge children's programme. The one year old puppy is already excelling in finding and chasing possums on her property. The dog is a great icebreaker for police interacting with the children affected by family violence.





What to do

- Invest in good quality locks and use them! Lock your house at night and when you're out and about
- Remove keys from vehicles
- Close access gates (particularly to your driveway/house)
- Keep an eye on neighbouring properties particularly if they're away
- Be observant – note down if you see suspicious people hanging about and/or description of vehicles including regos
- Make a detailed list of electronic equipment (include model and serial numbers), jewellery and other precious items. Take photos - these are invaluable when it comes to reporting the theft and/or identifying the goods.
- Report all instances of crime even if police response isn't necessary. If crime isn't reported then statistics will show there is no crime happening and Police resources will not be allocated to that area

I've lost count of the burglaries I have been to where the offender has simply walked in through an unlocked door or has stolen a vehicle because the keys were in it. The worst thing you can do is assume it won't happen to you.

• Have a Plan

Rural women are strong and capable, but there are a few issues that uniquely affect women in isolated communities, especially those of you who live alone. You will probably never have a prowler on your property or face an intruder in your house, but you should have a plan just in case.

If you wake and find an intruder in your home:

- get out if you can
- dial 111 and ask for Police
- listen to what Police tell you

- don't try and catch the intruder or block their escape
- if you have to act – yell or scream

If you suspect there is a prowler outside:

- dial 111 and ask for Police
- listen to what Police tell you
- turn on all outside lights if you are able to
- turn off all inside lights
- make a loud noise to frighten the prowler away

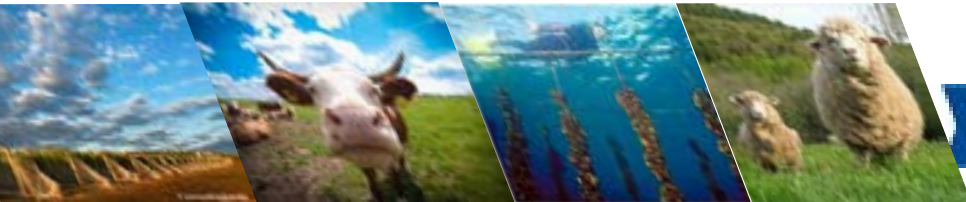
If you arrive home and think there's a burglar inside your house:

- dial 111 and ask for Police
- don't go inside
- go to a safe place and wait for Police.

• Command Centre

There are such a variety of duties and tasks to be completed on the farm or business that often the home can become the "command centre" where day to day obligations are met. Throw in family responsibilities and for some women, working a day in a traffic control tower would be less hectic than planning their own schedule for the day! If you haven't already, think about the following things you can do that might just help you in the long run:

- Check first aid kits in the house and ensure there is one in each vehicle including spare inhalers or antihistamines
- Sign up for a first aid course or make sure you are still current, refresher courses can be completed in a day
- Encourage anyone using a motorbike to wear a helmet. An average of five people are killed and 850 are injured



in work-related quad bike incidents on farms every year

- Talk to your children about stranger danger and keeping themselves safe. Get them to repeat it back to you to make sure they've understood. Often kids will say they understand when they don't.
- Keep an eye on what your children are doing online. Stranger danger isn't just face to face. Netsafe is a great website with tips for parents and staying up to date with technology and how to protect your kids
- Encourage firearm safety and put guns in a locked cabinet when they are not in use. Ensure the key is hidden out of a child's reach away from the cabinet.
- If you or your partner are heading out to work for the day in a remote area, discuss routes, expected time to be back home and if there is phone coverage
- If you're heading away on holiday let your neighbours know or have someone house-sit

If you need any advice or have any questions, feel free to ring the Police Station Ph 5785279 or go online to the rural hub on the police website <http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/personal-and-community-advice/rural-hub>.

Constable Jenny Buck

SHUT THE GATE
ON RURAL CRIME
TELL CRIMESTOPPERS WHAT YOU KNOW
CALL **0800 555 111**

IT'S YOUR CALL ...MAKE IT

New Zealand **POLICE**
Nga Pirihimana o Aotearoa

crimestoppers
0800 555 111
speak up, it's anonymous
www.crimestoppers-nz.org

Emergency contacts

24 hr Police Emergency Ph 111
Blenheim Station Ph 578 5279
24 hr Women's Refuge (03) 577 9939
24 hr Victim Support 0800 842 846

24 hr Youth Line 0800 376 6333
24 hr Crisis Team (Mental Health) 0800 800 717
Family Violence (9am-11pm) 0800 456 450
Or visit: www.areyouok.org.nz