

FRIDAY 8 OCTOBER 2021

RACV AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SAFETY AT HOME

With winter behind us and a roadmap out of lockdown announced, now is an ideal time to be thinking about the safety and security of your home and neighbourhood.

RACV and safety organisation Neighbourhood Watch have taken some of the guesswork out of home security by developing the *How Safe is My Place* tool. The new tool helps determine how safe your home is from burglary and what you can do to improve overall security.

The tool comes in the form of a free online quiz that asks a series of questions so you can assess how safe you are. The questions highlight ways of improving safety, and you will also have a report emailed to you at the end of the quiz.

The data is used by Neighbourhood Watch to identify communities where they can assist neighbours to work together and encourage people to get involved by starting up a new group or joining one that already exists.

Neighbourhood Watch and RACV aim to encourage people to get involved in grassroots activities that foster safety at home and in the community, whether that's for people that have recently moved to new housing estates or those in established areas.

Neighbourhood Watch CEO Bambi Gordon said the more people know their neighbours and get involved, the safer they feel.

"The tool gets you thinking about your current home security and what you can do to protect your home in terms of practical advice and tips," Ms Gordon said.

"Recent data findings from the *How Safe is My Place* tool has shown that Ballarat, Glen Eira, Moonee Valley, Mornington Peninsula, and Boroondara¹ all rated in the top five scores for safeness – in that residents in these areas are more likely to have undertaken the simple things they can do to keep home and family safe.

"In addition to using the *How Safe is My Place* tool, introducing yourself to neighbours and exchanging contact details, joining or establishing a Neighbourhood Watch group and securing your property to prevent opportunistic crimes can all make a significant difference."

Neighbourhood Watch Volunteer organiser for Williams Landing, Abi Bellamkonda, said that they've successfully transformed their neighbourhood into a friendly and safer area since establishing the group and working together with his neighbours.

"Having a group of us working together and in constant communication means we can get things done that otherwise couldn't be fixed as an individual. We also work with Victoria Police, the local council and the

¹ See table at the end of release

estate developers to make sure we are doing the right things to help people feel safe,” Mr Bellamkonda said.

“By communicating with each other, and educating or sharing ideas, any issues are getting solved quickly, and for good.”

RACV seeks to help shape a smarter, safer and more connected community for Victorians through partnerships like this one with Neighbourhood Watch and its product offerings for the home.

RACV General Manager Home Portfolio Darren Turner said: “We are proud to be partnering with Neighbourhood Watch and delivering the *How Safe Is My Place* initiative. Traditionally at this time of year the property market surges and this year when we will also be emerging from lockdown, it is important to check that your home insurances are up to date whether you are returning to work which is away from home, or if you are moving house.

“The *How Safe Is My Place* tool provides you with practical tips and advice on how to keep your home, treasured possessions and family secure. The tool can help inform decisions on home insurance and whether it is worth considering installing a security system for added peace of mind.”

To take the quiz and use the tool, please visit howsafeismyplace.com.au.

-ENDS-

Further information:

Neighbourhood Watch How Safe Is My Place data findings

Top 5 Average Safeness (score out of 10):

1. City of Ballarat (8.64)
2. City of Glen Eira (8.06)
3. City of Moonee Valley (7.97)
4. Shire of Mornington Peninsula (7.86)
5. City of Boroondara (7.80)

	Average Safeness	How well do you know your neighbour	Valuables secured out of sight	Keys stored out of sight	Have security system	Have sensor lights	Parks in garage
City of Ballarat	8.64	63.71%	54.84%	83.87%	35.48%	58.06%	51.61%
City of Glen Eira	8.06	65.20%	39.22%	82.35%	47.06%	35.29%	52.94%
City of Moonee Valley	7.97	70.00%	34.29%	80.00%	57.14%	28.57%	57.14%
Shire of Mornington Peninsula	7.86	71.05%	50.00%	92.11%	31.58%	31.58%	60.53%
City of Boroondara	7.80	70.07%	47.37%	86.84%	60.53%	27.63%	52.63%

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