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**SARM looking for more volunteers to join Rural Crime Watch initiative to reduce crime in rural municipalities**

"Rural municipal landowners have been keeping a watchful eye over their land for years because the risk of crime happening and going unnoticed in remote areas is a reality they live with. So this idea of a Rural Crime Watch Association is exactly what we need for our residents. The only way we will find success with our recently established Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association (SRCWA) is by members joining together to volunteer," says Ray Orb, SARM President.

SARM's call to action is for more residents in our 296 RMs to join as volunteers with local crime watch groups. Rural municipalities have struggled with criminal activity for years, with little to no support available due to the vast and remote nature of these areas. If more rural residents and landowners volunteered to join a local crime watch group it could lead to the prevention of criminal activity by providing a seamless network of eyes and ears for our police agencies to act.

"It's as simple as taking a ride with a neighbor to check the land, watching for suspicious vehicles and activities while out in your yard, using a member call list or "What's App" to report suspicious behavior in the neighborhood." shares Tim Brodt, Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association President.

Statistics show that areas with organized crime watch programs tend to have a significant reduction in criminal activity. This includes theft of equipment and grain, vandalism, dumping of garbage, trespassing, break-and-enters, and cattle rustling. "Rural municipalities have the opportunity to band together for a collective goal of community safety. This is a long time coming and we are happy to see this collaboration working in our RMs. Stepping up and representing rural Saskatchewan won't take up a lot of your time and it's a necessity in preventing rural crime." says Ray Orb, SARM President

This newly formed collaboration is underway with SARM, but the call for more of our members to join the initiative continues. Volunteers work together in their RMs to report suspicious activity immediately to the RCMP or 911. The need for volunteers shouldn't go unnoticed, RMs need these volunteers' knowledge of the land and their eyes and ears for local police when they may not be in their area.

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For interview requests about the growing need for volunteers in rural municipalities for the Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch please contact:

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**Background:** *SARM is the independent association that represents its membership of rural municipal government in Saskatchewan and is the principal advocate in representing them before senior governments.*

*The Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association (SRCWA) brings efforts to combat rural crime together; under one provincial umbrella. The non-profit association is led by SARM, SUMA, Rural Crime Watch members, the RCMP, and the Ministry of Corrections and Policing. It's a community-led and police-supported program dedicated to preventing and reducing criminal behavior.*

*SARM's 117th Annual Convention is March 15-17, 2022, at the Queensbury Centre in Regina. We invite provincial news agencies to join us as representatives from rural Saskatchewan municipalities converge to discuss and debate key, timely topics, among them, the critical issue of Saskatchewan's increasing need for volunteers in RM's to join the Rural Crime Watch.*