

January 14, 2026

### **Foothills County RCMP encourage public to adopt new online habits for 2026**

Foothills County, Alta. - As 2026 begins, the Foothills County RCMP is encouraging Albertans to take a fresh look at their digital habits and online activity. With rapid advances in artificial intelligence, cybercriminals and fraudsters are increasingly using new tools to manipulate photos, clone voices, and exploit personal information shared on social media.

These emerging trends highlight the importance of protecting your online presence and being mindful of what you post, especially when it involves children, family members, or identifiable personal details.

The new year is a great time to reassess your relationship with technology and take simple steps to reduce digital risk. The Foothills County RCMP encourages residents to consider the following safer online practices:

- Avoid posting personal details such as your home address, workplace, daily routines, travel plans, or financial information. Even small pieces of data can be used to build a profile for fraud or identity theft.
- Think carefully before posting or sharing identifiable photos of minors. Once an image is online, you lose control over how it may be used, saved, or altered. Consider using private sharing platforms or reducing the number of images posted publicly.
- Review social-media privacy settings at least once a year. Ensure only trusted individuals can see your posts, photos, and personal information. Adjust tagging permissions so you can approve what others share about you.
- Short voice clips, video messages, and livestreams can all be used to create AI-generated impersonations. Be cautious about posting audio or video that includes your full voice, your child's voice, or private conversations.
- Protect email, banking, and social-media accounts with long, complex passwords. Enable two-factor authentication whenever possible to prevent unauthorized access.
- If you receive a call claiming to be a family member who needs money urgently, hang up and verify the situation through a trusted number. Do not rely on caller ID or voice recognition alone.
- Young people are often targeted for image manipulation, cyberbullying, and scams. Encourage open conversations about what they post, who they interact with, and how to report anything suspicious.

### **Foothills County RCMP reminds public of safe practices for online buying and selling**

Foothills County, Alberta RCMP is encouraging residents to take extra precautions when arranging online buy-and-sell exchanges. With more people using online platforms to buy and sell personal items, it is important to take steps to protect yourself and reduce the risk of theft, fraud, or personal harm.

To help keep community members safe, the Foothills County RCMP offers the following advice when arranging in-person exchanges:

- Do not invite buyers or sellers to your home and avoid sharing your home address or any information that could reveal your residence.
- Always bring a friend or family member with you and let others know where you're going and when you expect to return.
- Meet in a busy area with strong lighting and video surveillance, such as a shopping mall, public parking lot, or a designated "safe exchange zone" at a police detachment. To confirm whether your community has a safe exchange location, contact your local police detachment or visit their website.
- If the other party suddenly wants to change the meeting place, asks you to follow them to another location, or suggests a secluded spot, treat this as a red flag and cancel the exchange.
- Avoid vacant parking lots or private residences.
- Write down the buyer or seller's username, phone number, email, and chat history. In many cases, offenders will block the victim immediately after a theft, making it difficult to retrieve information later.
- Be wary of deals that seem too good to be true. If someone refuses to meet in a safe, public location or pressures you to meet elsewhere, consider it a warning sign.
- Review the other party's profile and check when the account was created. Look for previous ratings or reviews, and confirm the person appears legitimate before agreeing to meet.
- Conduct exchanges during the day whenever possible, when visibility and foot traffic are higher

For more safety tips follow us on Facebook @RCMPinAlberta and on X @RCMPAlberta.

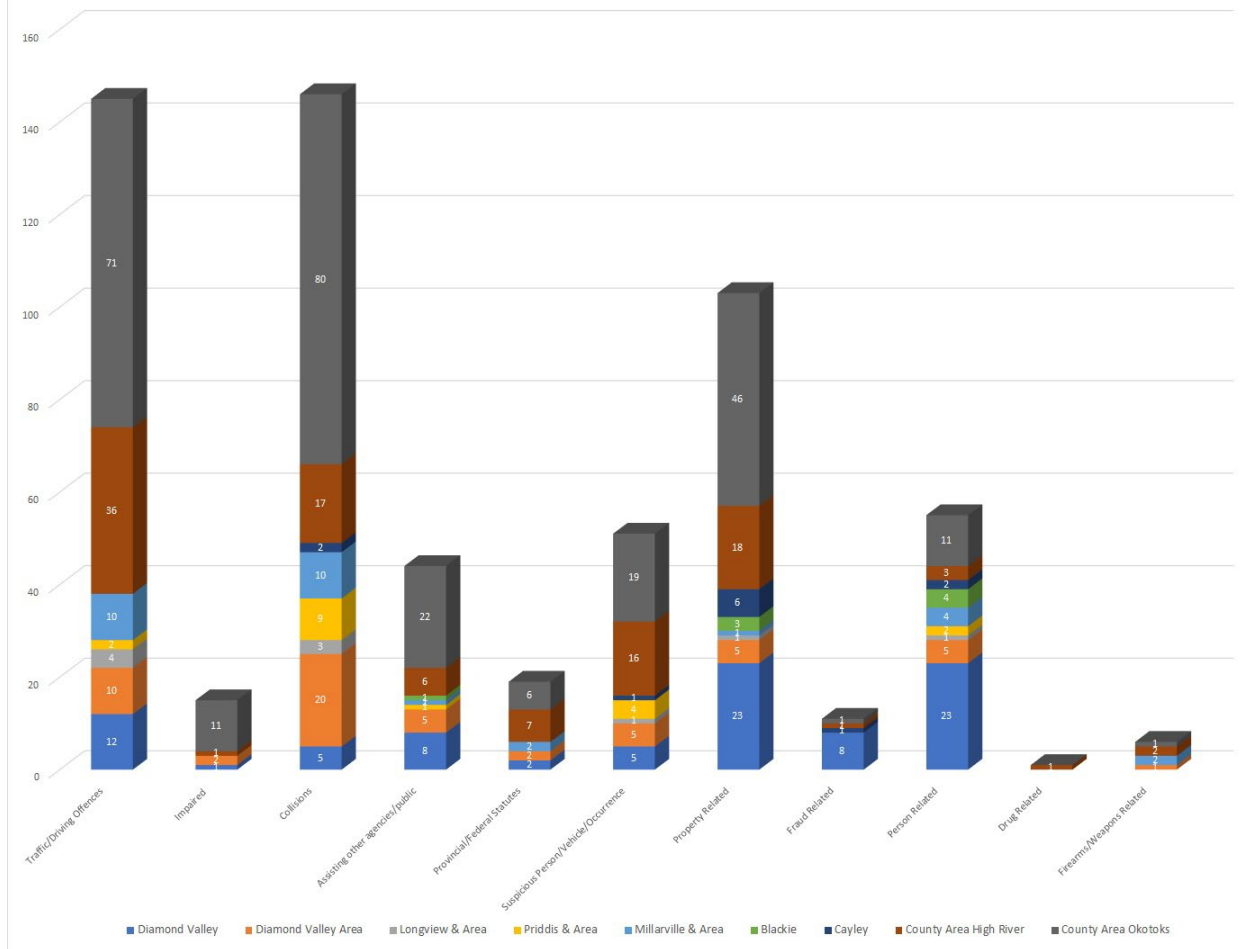
As always, report any suspicious activity to your local RCMP Detachment, 24/7:

- Turner Valley RCMP – 403-933-4262
- High River RCMP – 403-652-2356
- Okotoks RCMP – 403-938-4202

Or reach out to us by calling 310-RCMP (7267) for non-emergency complaints

Stay safe and keep any eye out for one another.

Rural Crime Statistics for  
November 2025 in Foothills County Area



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