



**STATISTICS CANADA REPORT DOESN'T CAPTURE FULL PICTURE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN B.C.**  
Shoplifting up 66 per cent over past decade. Too many people see little value in reporting crimes.

**VANCOUVER, B.C. (July 23, 2025)** – Following Statistics Canada's release of police-reported crime statistics for 2024, which confirms a shocking 66 per cent increase in shoplifting over the past decade, Save Our Streets (SOS) is cautioning all levels of government that the report does not provide a complete picture of the level of crime being experienced in communities and that the need for transformative reform is greater than ever.

"Unfortunately, we can take no comfort in this report, which only tells half the story of what's going on in B.C. communities," says Jess Ketchum, Co-founder, SOS. "Take a walk in almost any downtown in B.C. and it's quickly apparent and obvious that street disorder and crime has not decreased. In cities like Victoria, nearly half of downtown businesses are considering closing and the city has had to step in and take more than \$10 million from other needed projects to address the many issues contributing to the crime and lack of public safety on its streets, many of which are the responsibility of the provincial and federal government."

While the report released yesterday notes some minor declines in some criminal activities, the overall report provides a misleading picture of crime in Canada because it only addresses police-reported crime. Feedback from B.C. residents and businesses and province-wide polling commissioned by SOS last year suggests the crimes rates in communities across the province are likely much higher as many crimes are going unreported because people have lost faith in the justice system.

"I stopped calling bylaw enforcement and police about a year ago," says Tanya Finley, the owner of Finley's Bar and Grill and Sage in Nelson, B.C., and past President of the Nelson Police Foundation. "Crime seems to have become normalized, and citizens are having to self-patrol their communities. These days, I deal with all these matters myself. I wish the police had the resources they require to make significant change. No wonder the crime statistics went down."

One shocking trend captured by the report is that the incidents of shoplifting continue to rise across the country. The rate of shoplifting has increased for four years in a row (rising 14 per cent from 2023) and has increased 66 per cent during the period from 2014 to 2024.

"Sadly, those statistics reflect what we are experiencing at London Drugs and what we are hearing from our SOS member businesses across British Columbia," says Clint Mahlman, President and COO, London Drugs, and Co-founder and Chair, SOS. "What's especially troubling is that this shoplifting which is damaging their businesses and terrorizing their employees and customers is increasingly being carried out in coordinated and sophisticated ways by members of organized crime groups."

"B.C.'s new Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General is correct in saying that we need to invest more in policing, mental health and addiction supports, housing and crime-prevention initiatives, but pretty much everyone in all levels of government have been saying that," adds Ketchum. "If everyone agrees that more needs to be done, what are we waiting for? We are getting little if any results as we only take incremental actions when transformational change is desperately needed. The key things to consider are not whether a statistic has gone down a point or two, but do we feel safe walking in our downtowns, is it safe for workers to go to work and residents to shop, are businesses able to remain open employing people and serving communities, are we reducing the number of people sleeping on our streets, are people suffering from addiction and mental illness getting the help they need? Sadly, the answer to many of those questions is no. That is simply not acceptable. As Canadians, we have a collective obligation to demand more from our governments and our justice system."

**About Save Our Streets**

Save Our Streets is a coalition of 100-plus community and business organizations representing every corner of British Columbia. SOS members are committed to seeing governments bring order and public safety back to communities across British Columbia. Concerned citizen groups, and B.C. businesses interested in joining or supporting SOS are invited to submit online at [SaveOurStreets.ca](https://SaveOurStreets.ca) or contact [info@saveourstreets.ca](mailto:info@saveourstreets.ca).