

Other relevant provisions from the Crimes Act 1961 state:

### 52 Defence of movable property against trespasser

Everyone in peaceable possession of any movable thing, and everyone lawfully assisting him, is justified in using reasonable force to resist the taking of the thing by any trespasser or to retake it from any trespasser, if in either case he does not strike or do bodily harm to the trespasser.

### 55 Defence of dwellinghouse

Everyone in peaceable possession of a dwellinghouse, and everyone lawfully assisting him or acting by his authority, is justified in using such force as is necessary to prevent the forcible breaking and entering of the dwellinghouse by any person if he believes, on reasonable and probable grounds, that there is no lawful justification for the breaking and entering.

### 56 Defence of land or building

Everyone in peaceable possession of any land or building, and everyone lawfully assisting him or acting by his authority, is justified in using reasonable force to prevent any person from trespassing on the land or building or to remove him therefrom, if he does not strike or do bodily harm to that person.

**You can assist by reporting all instances of crime even when a police response is not necessary – the police need to know the pattern of crime in an area.**



You can help police by reporting all instances of suspicious behaviour or crime. It helps police to know who is in the community or if there is a pattern of crime developing in an area that needs further investigation or that the rest of the community should be alerted to.

**You can assist by clearly tagging animals and keeping accurate stock and produce records, locking all rural buildings, houses, fuel, machinery etc.**



You should have a detailed inventory of all personal valuables and household and business equipment, including model and serial numbers, inscriptions, and other identifying features.

[www.police.govt.nz/safety](http://www.police.govt.nz/safety)



New Zealand Government

# STAYING SAFE IN RURAL New Zealand

**Police can and will respond to rural crime, but keep in mind police may need to travel long distances to get to you.**

Call 111 when you need **immediate** help with a life-threatening or time-critical emergency.

Some emergencies will need more than one service (Fire, Ambulance and Police). Ask for the service which is needed most urgently. All emergency services have links to each other and the first service called will notify the other services if they are required.

For non-urgent situations, call or visit your local police station. If there's no immediate danger or the incident happened a while ago then it's probably not an emergency. If you can't decide if it's a real emergency and you're still worried, call 111 and ask us. We'll help you work out what to do.

[www.police.govt.nz](http://www.police.govt.nz)



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Using the rural RAPID<sup>1</sup> numbering system to identify your property will ensure all emergency services reach you as fast as possible as call takers and dispatchers will be better able to determine your location.

➤➤ If you have a rural address, your RAPID number should be clearly displayed on your front gate where it can be seen easily from both directions day and night. Keep directions for getting to your property, including your phone number and RAPID number by the phone and make sure every member of the family – even young children – can explain it. Show visitors where the directions are. Your RAPID number is assigned by your local Council.

Be organised. Discuss and prepare. There is much that rural communities already do to prevent crime and these precautions should be well understood by all members of the community.

➤➤ Rural New Zealand has a reputation for tight-knit, supportive communities. Knowing your neighbours, exchanging contact phone numbers and keeping those numbers handy, and discussing what you could do to alert or assist each other in an emergency is good preparation.

It is a good idea to let neighbours know you are going on holiday or leaving your home overnight.

Preventing crime in rural areas and minimising its impact will be most effective when it is a partnership between rural people, police, local authorities and local organisations.

➤➤ Your local authority, government departments such as Child Youth and Family, the Ministry of Health and the Department of Conservation, and organisations like Neighbourhood Support, Community Patrols of New Zealand, Victim Support, Citizens' Advice and Women's Refuge can all assist you with information on how to stay safe or get assistance.

You can reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime in rural areas by taking precautions.

➤➤ If living on a farm and leaving the house to investigate something untoward, first ensure that someone knows where you are going, as much as possible about what you are checking, and how long you expect it will take. This could involve phoning the police or your neighbour, waiting for a neighbour to join you, and taking a mobile phone or handheld radio with you.

Crime has three distinct components. Firstly, a motivated offender (someone who wants or has the propensity to commit crime). Secondly, a suitable target (i.e. your place because it is unlocked and has sought-after items inside) and thirdly, lack of a guardian (no one around). However, opportunity is the key ingredient. Reduce the opportunity by taking notice of who is out and about and talking to them (particularly if they aren't locals), locking your house, removing keys, closing access gates (particularly to your driveway/house), and keeping an eye on each others' property.

What you do when responding to rural crime must always be within the law but you are entitled to protect yourself and your property.

➤➤ Your first concern should always be your own safety and that of others with you. Never take the law into your own hands or take unnecessary risks. If there are intruders on your property, call the police. The police are trained to deal with trespassers and other criminals. Incidents can quickly get out of hand.

Section 48 of the Crimes Act 1961 provides justification, which means a person is not guilty of an offence and not liable to any civil proceeding, for using self-defence in **some** circumstances to protect themselves or others.

<sup>1</sup> RAPID stands for Rural Address Property Identification. It is a nationwide system for giving every rural property with a dwelling an address so it is easier to locate. As part of the process of allocating RAPID numbers, a GPS reading is also taken. Most local authorities have completed rural numbering and can provide you with your RAPID number and for a small fee a RAPID number plate.