



March 30, 2009

BTAC endorses *Operation Hands Off* as industry “best practice” to prevent bike theft

Last summer, Toronto police seized more than 2,700 stolen bicycles when they cracked an organized theft ring.

This is just the tip of the national iceberg with regard to bike theft. By some estimates, more than 100,000 bicycles are stolen every year in Canada. To make matters worse, most of these bicycles were never reunited with their owners, since there was no way to identify them.

To help remedy this problem, the Bicycle Trade Association of Canada (BTAC) is endorsing *Operation Hands Off*, a coordinated strategy that brings together everyone from manufacturers and dealers to insurance companies, bike owners, and police.

Under *Operation Hands Off*, bicycles are registered in an online database accessible by police right across the country. Participation is easy: a simple decal with a machine-readable code is applied to the bike and registered at the time of application (for example, when a new bike is purchased, or an existing bicycle is brought in for servicing). For high-end bikes, special microdot technology is available so all major components can be marked.

With more and more Canadians embracing cycling for fitness, fun, sport, and as environmentally-friendly transportation, it's time we got serious about preventing theft and catching thieves.

Join BTAC and our partners in *Operation Hands Off*: Canadian Crime Stoppers, Norco Performance Bikes, and DataDot Technology Canada.

Let the bike thieves keep walking -- we'd rather ride!

Sincerely,

Janet O'Connell
Executive Director
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