

Andrew Koubaridis, [Brianna Travers](#), [Tom Minear](#), Wes Hosking, Herald Sun  
April 9, 2020 9:37pm

---

### **OPERATION NIGHTS WATCH KEEPS BUSINESSES SAFE**

Victorians are beefing up their security to protect their homes and businesses during the pandemic lockdown while police crack down on commercial burglaries.

RACV Insurance last month recorded a 259 per cent spike in sales of closed-circuit TV equipment and a 34 per cent increase in sales of alarm systems on March last year.

Many householders are wanting the setups installed the next day.

Many Victorians want to keep an eye on vacant holiday homes and empty business premises during the confinement period.

Police arrested 54 people and hit 110 with coronavirus breach notices as part of Operation Nights Watch, a crackdown on commercial burglaries in the city and Yarra municipalities from April 1-8.

Among those arrested were a 17-year-old boy allegedly armed with a fake gun, knife and drugs entering a Carlton service station.

Alex Legge, of Jim's Security, said he had also logged an increased demand for security, especially CCTV - installations, for family homes over recent weeks.

"Many customers are concerned that we may see an increase in theft and burglary," Mr Legge said.

"We have also seen an increase in inquiries from businesses looking to increase security while they have to shut down temporarily."

Mr Legge said associate company Jim's Antennas had experienced "extraordinary-level demand" for installation and repairs, TV wall mounting, data point installation and wi-fi booster units as people

prepared for weeks or months in lockdown.

The latest figures come as RACV and Neighbourhood Watch today launch today a "How Safe Is My Place" campaign to help people feel safer.

The initiative will help residents identify what they can do to reduce the risk of burglary.

RACV's home general manager Darren Turner said prevention was the best defence against crime, even as Victorians families are spending more time at home.

"Security in and around the home is of paramount importance to Victorians during these uncertain times," he said.

"Many are also wanting to keep an eye on unattended businesses and holiday properties. And we're glad we can help them do that."

Neighbourhood Watch chief Bambi Gordon urged homeowners and renters to take its online quiz to check how secure their homes were.

"It is not just about installing security equipment. Crime prevention can be as simple as putting a piece of dowel in the track of your sliding door," Ms Gordon said.