

## **BURGLARY TO MOTOR VEHICLE & AUTO THEFT CRIME PREVENTION TIPS**

When you decide to park your car at a shopping mall, a swimming pool, a sporting event, on the street in front of your residence or even in your own driveway, the only thing that comes between a thief and the valuables in your car is the auto glass.

- **Hide your valuables.** Don't leave personal or valuable items in plain view where they might be a temptation. It's better if you don't leave any items inside the passenger compartment of your vehicle. Lock all valuables inside the trunk.
- **Keep your car visible.** Try to park in busy well-lighted areas. This will help to prevent car burglaries because thieves don't like the light and the public attention. It's also a good idea for personal safety.
- **Trust your instincts.** If you see suspicious activity, find somewhere else to park. Don't confront anyone: If you're concerned, report your suspicions to the police. By reporting suspicious activity to the proper authorities, you can help prevent others from becoming a victim of a car burglary or another crime.
- **Make burglaries difficult.** Car burglars don't want an audience when stealing your belongings. Every precaution you can take makes it more likely they'll move on. Following this simple advice will give you an added layer of protection against car burglaries.
  - Lock your doors and roll up your windows when you park
  - Activate your security system
  - Avoid using the console or glove box as mobile lock boxes
  - Take GPS units and their mounts with you

**Theft of motor vehicle parts.** Offenders target parked unoccupied vehicles and will steal automobile tires, hubcaps, side mirrors, hood ornaments, air bags, car radio stereos, speakers, catalytic convertors and other parts due to their lucrative value. In particular, catalytic convertors contain expensive precious metals which are very valuable when sold on the open market. Report any suspicious persons tampering with parked cars immediately to the police.

### *Auto Theft Prevention*

Taking precautionary measures can minimize your chances of becoming the victim of Auto Theft. In the United States, a vehicle is stolen an average of every 21 minutes. Not only does Auto Theft cost the victim time and money, but it cost society because it increases insurance premiums and many times stolen vehicles are used to commit other crimes. Car thefts seem to occur with greater frequency at any time of the day where large groups of cars are parked for extended periods of time in places such as shopping centers, schools, sporting events, car dealerships and large apartment complexes.

**Don't leave the keys in the car.** You wouldn't think we should have to mention that, would you? We DO mention it because people do this...at home more than on the road, but you should never, ever leave your keys or a spare set of keys in the car.

For more information, contact Lieutenant Rathmell from the Crime Prevention Unit at (847) 673-2167 or [rrathmell@lwd.org](mailto:rrathmell@lwd.org)