



A theft from your vehicle can happen at any hour of the day or night. By reporting suspicious activity, *while it's occurring*, you could save yourself or your neighbor from being victimized. Suspicious activity includes:

- The sound of glass breaking (a popping sound)
- Someone looking into cars or ducking around them
- Someone tampering with a car
- A person carrying tools or property that doesn't fit the setting in your neighborhood
- Activity that "just doesn't look or feel right"

**If you see or hear something that seems unusual or suspicious**, try to get a description of the suspects and their vehicle while remaining in a safe location. **Call 911** immediately and stay on the line.

Don't think you are "bothering" the police by calling them to report suspicious activity. It's their job to detect and apprehend criminals—but they need your help because they can't be in everyone's neighborhood 24 hours a day. If your suspicions prove to be unfounded, you shouldn't feel embarrassed. The police prefer you call them so they can investigate the suspicious activity. Remember;

*it's better to be mistaken  
than to be a victim*

***If you locate property that may have been stolen or discover you have been the victim of a vehicle-related theft, call 911 immediately.***

### **WHAT ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES CAN I TAKE?**

- Utilize secured parking such as garages. Do not leave a garage door opener in plain view; treat it as a key to your property.
- Park in well-lit, well-traveled areas.
- Use dusk to dawn outdoor security lighting, which also helps to prevent crimes such as theft, vandalism and burglary.
- Consider equipping your car with anti-theft deterrents such as electronic vehicle disabling devices, a steering wheel locking device, or an alarm system.

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Increase the chances of your stolen property being recovered by recording your vehicle's license plate and vehicle information numbers (VIN). Also, keep detailed records of valuables including make, model and serial numbers, as well as photo documentation. Consider marking items with a unique identification number such as driver's license number. To obtain additional crime prevention information, contact the Roseville Police Department at 651-792-7209, the Minnesota Crime Watch, or your insurance agent.



# **VEHICLE THEFT**



***An auto owner's  
guide to prevention***

## VEHICLE-RELATED THEFTS ON THE RISE

Each year thousands of automobile-related thefts are reported in the Twin Cities Metro Area, and many go unreported. Numerous thefts occur in parking lots and in our own driveways. The popularity of portable GPS, radar detectors, and expensive sound systems, which are quickly and easily stolen, seems to encourage car prowlers.

### COMMON METHODS OF ENTRY INTO VEHICLES

- Smash out a window
- Use a tool to unlock the door
- Crawl through a pickup truck topper and force or pry open the sliding window.
- Enter vehicle in un-secured garage
- **No force** — door left unlocked



### THE MOST LIKELY TARGETS FOR THEFT

- Vehicles with removable electronics and/or other valuables left visible.
- Vehicles left unlocked and/or windows open.
- Vehicles left running unattended.
- Vehicles parked in poorly lit areas away from public view.
- Vehicles not protected with anti-theft devices.

## PROPERTY MOST OFTEN STOLEN FROM VEHICLES

- ◆ Purses, checkbooks and wallets.
- ◆ Laptops
- ◆ Gym bags
- ◆ Briefcases
- ◆ Camera gear
- ◆ Jewelry
- ◆ Auto Parts
- ◆ Sunglasses
- ◆ Portable GPS, DVD players, and radar detectors
- ◆ Compact disks and ipods
- ◆ Stereo equipment
- ◆ Hand tools, toolboxes, power tools
- ◆ Money, coins



### WHAT DO THIEVES DO WITH THE PROPERTY THEY STEAL?

Many stolen vehicles are stripped for parts, some are sold to unsuspecting consumers, and others are smuggled abroad. Thieves also use stolen vehicles to commit other crimes or take them on joyrides, leaving them abandoned.

Items stolen from vehicles may be sold to other criminals or for cash at pawn shops. They may also be sold through classified ads posted on popular internet sites and in newspapers. Many thieves look for wallets and purses, then make purchases on credit cards and use personal information to steal their victim's identification. This may result in numerous forms of fraud which can cause an incredible amount of worry, hassle and inconvenience.

## HOW CAN I PREVENT A THEFT FROM MY VEHICLE?

To deter a criminal from breaking into your car, lock your vehicle and put valuables out of sight, preferably in the trunk, **BEFORE YOU DRIVE TO YOUR DESTINATION** or bring them along with you. Thieves have told police they watch people move their valuables into their trunks. Then, as soon as victims are out of view, they pop open the trunk and take their belongings. This is especially common in business parking lots and recreational areas such as parks.

Thieves will break into any vehicle if they think there is something of value to be stolen. They know laptops, wallets, watches, calculators and other small electronics may be contained in a briefcase. Similarly, they are aware that many gym bags contain valuable jewelry, keys, cash, and portable electronic devices, etc.



After removing valuables from view, lock your car doors and make sure windows are closed. This will discourage the more casual thieves, the ones looking for the *opportunity* to steal. It will also deter those who go into an unlocked vehicle to look for a trunk or hood release button in order to steal auto parts or the contents of the trunk.