



## PREVENTING THEFT FROM VEHICLES

### **Always lock your car**

Theft from vehicles is another reason why you should always lock your car. Opportunistic thieves will often rummage through any type of vehicle they find unlocked seeking valuables in your car. Prevent this type of theft by always keeping your vehicle locked or within a locked garage. Activate your alarm or have one installed.

### **Never store valuables in open sight**

Never attract thieves to your vehicle by storing valuables or packages in open sight. Opportunistic thieves will not hesitate to break into your vehicle if they see something they want or think there might be value in such as a briefcase or empty purse. Do not leave cash or small change in plain view.

Prevent damage to your vehicle and loss of its contents by removing valuables from your vehicle at your earliest opportunity. Where you must store valuables in your vehicle for a short period of time, lock them in a trunk or, where your vehicle does not have a trunk; cover them as discreetly as possible.

Use slide or portable mounts on add-on radios, GPS units and telephones. When you leave your vehicle, put them in the trunk or take them with you. If the mount on the dash or windshield is removable, take away the temptation that something of value was left in the vehicle. Remove the tell tail suction cup mark also.

## ANTI-THEFT DEVICES

There are numerous auto manufacturer or after market anti-theft devices available. Some insurance companies will provide you with a rate discount if you use these devices. To help you decide which device(s) may be best for you, consider these facts before you buy:

- Steering wheel locks: while an excellent visual deterrent, are relatively inconvenient to use and cannot be relied on to physically stop a thief
- The most effective anti-theft systems are systems that set themselves.
- The hidden nature of automatic engine shut-off switches (disabler/ignition kill switch) offers no visual deterrence (unless window decals are used) but is the best means of preventing vehicle theft
- Satellite tracking devices, while excellent for locating stolen vehicles, offer no visual deterrence (unless window decals are used) and will not physically prevent your vehicle from being stolen
- Window etching offers a visual deterrence that reduces the value of the car to profit oriented thieves, but may not deter thieves looking for short term transport
- Car alarms create an audio deterrent the effectiveness of which is reduced by the frequency of false alarms. Car alarms can be combined with engine disable switches
- Fuel switch cut off
- Remote Starter with anti-theft ignition kill feature

## PREVENTING MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

You can dramatically reduce the risk of vehicle theft by following these simple do's and don'ts.

### DO

- Always lock your vehicle and close your windows tightly
- Wherever possible, when parking, turn your wheels and set your parking brake to make towing your vehicle more difficult
- Utilize an anti-theft device such as a car alarm, an automatic engine shut-off, a tracking device or the permanent etching of identification information onto your windows

### DON'T

- Leave an unattended vehicle running
- Leave your keys in the ignition
- Place a spare key in the vehicle
- Leave your original insurance or owner-ship documents in your vehicle

### MOST COMMONLY STOLEN VEHICLES:

- Dodge Caravan
- Honda Civic/Accord
- Plymouth Voyager
- VW Jetta
- Jeep Grand Cherokee



### If your vehicle is stolen:

1. Report the theft to police immediately – **911 If theft is in progress** or **416-808-2222 Non-emergency number, if there has been some time delay and no suspect information**
2. If your car or accessories are stolen, the police need specific information to identify the car, parts and accessories

### You should record the following:

- Year, make, model, and colour(s)
- Licence number
- Vehicle identification number
- Serial numbers of all special equipment
- Special Markings – dents, scratches, other damage etc.

Remember never pick up hitchhikers. Travel on well lighted busy streets. Avoid unsafe areas. On your daily routes, look for safe places to stop, such as police or fire stations, all night convenience stores, or gas stations.

## UNDERGROUND PARKING SAFETY:

- Call police if you see suspicious persons/activity in any parking lot
- If possible, have someone accompany you in underground parking lots
- Always look in the back seat of your vehicle before unlocking it
- Have a whistle or personal alarm ready
- Have your keys ready to unlock your car and on a separate key ring from your house keys
- Lock your vehicle door as soon as you and your passengers are seated
- Ensure all windows are closed and doors are locked after parking your vehicle
- If you have a choice, park in a well lighted, busy section of the parking lot
- Do not leave luggage, parcels, valuables etc. on the seats or in full view inside your vehicle, use your trunk
- After opening an automatic gate/door to an underground garage, watch out for thieves waiting to slip inside. Wait for the gate/door to close behind you. Make it a policy for your building that only one vehicle enters at a time. The 30 second inconvenience can save you and your neighbours the aggravation of a theft from auto or a potential break in to your unit

Report all crime to police, even if it is only an attempt. Crime cannot be controlled or prevented if it is not reported. By reporting crimes and suspicious activities you can protect yourself and others. Confrontation with suspicious people or suspected criminals is not recommended. Remember your safety is paramount. If a crime has occurred, do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected it for evidence.

- Become the best witness possible by noticing details about the suspect, mannerism, age, height, weight and appearance, compare them to yourself or people you know
- Memorize tattoos, scars or prominent features
- Note clothing worn but keep in mind that outer clothing can be changed
- Vehicle licence number, make, model, colour and number of doors
- Call police immediately! Hesitate long enough to ensure your own safety