

Auto Burglary Prevention Tips

Tis the season for thefts from vehicles. A key ingredient happens this time of year; warm weather. As the temperatures stay warmer people will have a tendency to leave windows down, sunroofs open and doors unlocked. After such a long, cold winter that kept everyone cooped up, we're all enamored by the chance to enjoy the outdoors more.

However, it's equally warm for those with ill intent. The warm weather allows them to be out walking day or night. These thefts are generally a crime of opportunity and when they see items of interest sitting in the vehicle they will either break in or find the doors unlocked and take what they want.

As a result of this crime the victim not only suffers the financial loss of the items taken, but also any damage done to the vehicle. Most importantly their personal sense of well-being is violated.

This is one of those crimes that truly doesn't have to happen. One Johnson County city recently experienced a rash of thefts from vehicles. According to news reports, at least 14 vehicles had items stolen from them and 12 of those were left unlocked. Earlier in my career, I was part of a project that focused our citizens' attention on taking a few extra seconds to secure their vehicles. Over the summer months, in a targeted geographic area, this crime was dramatically reduced. The key ingredient in that reduction was the citizens' awareness and involvement.

While there are many tips we could offer to prevent this crime here are the two most important:

- Anytime your vehicle is unattended it should be locked
- Take time to remove or at least hide all valuables from view.

We need your help. Working together we can dramatically reduce this crime and keep this city one of the safest around.