

A theft from your vehicle can happen at any hour of the day or night. By reporting suspicious activity, *while it is occurring*, you could save yourself or someone else from being victimized. **If you see or hear something that seems unusual or suspicious;**

*Try to get a description of the suspects and their vehicle and **CALL 911** immediately and stay on the line if ---*

- You hear glass breaking (a popping sound)
- You see someone looking into cars or ducking around them
- A person carrying tools and/or property that doesn't fit the area or neighborhood
- Activity that "just doesn't look or feel right"

Never think you are "bothering" the police by calling them to report suspicious activity! It is their job to detect and apprehend criminals but they need your help. Police would rather be called to investigate suspicious activity than to take a report after a crime and know that someone witnessed the crime but didn't call for help. Remember – *It is better to be mistaken than to be a victim!*

If you discover that you have been a victim of a theft from your vehicle or locate property that may have been stolen call the police immediately.

WHAT ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES CAN I TAKE?

Outdoor security lighting from dusk to dawn is inexpensive and may help to deter crimes such as theft, vandalism and burglary. Many vehicles are equipped with alarm systems – if not; you may want to consider having one installed. Your best deterrent to being a victim of theft from your vehicle is to not leave items in your vehicle that are desirable to criminals!

You can increase your chances of stolen property being recovered by keeping records of make, model and serial numbers of your property.

To obtain additional crime prevention information, contact Crime Prevention Unit at your police department.

Saint Paul Police
Department
Crime Prevention Unit
651-266-5625

THEFT FROM VEHICLES



An Auto Owners
Guide to
Theft
Prevention

Thefts from vehicles have increased over the past several years. This is not specific to any part of our city or our state for that matter. Many of the thefts occur in our own driveways, garages, and neighborhoods. The popularity of expensive electronic equipment which is easily stolen from vehicles seems to have encouraged thieves. Items such as GPS devices and elaborate sound systems are often left in vehicles and therefore subject to being stolen.

The Saint Paul Police Department and insurance companies would like to help you avoid the frustration, inconvenience, and experience of being a victim of this type of crime. Please read this information and share it with your family and friends to help them learn more about prevention of thefts from vehicles.

COMMON METHODS OF ENTRY INTO VEHICLES

- Smash out a window
- Use a tool to unlock the door
- Crawl through a pickup truck topper & force the sliding window
- Enter vehicle in unsecured garage
- **No forced necessary – doors unlocked!**

THE MOST LIKELY TARGETS FOR THEFT

- Vehicles with visible GPS, and electronic devices in site
- Vehicles containing a purse, brief case, gym bag, camera cases, etc. in clear site
- Vehicles with cell phones, I-pod, blackberry's, cash, credit cards, or check books in clear site
- Vehicles left running unattended at convenience stores, gas stations, or even in your own driveway and/or garage

PROPERTY MOST OFTEN STOLEN FROM VEHICLES

- GPS or radar detectors
- I-Pods or MP3 players
- Purse, wallet, checkbook, laptop, I-pad, brief cases
- Gym bags or back packs
- Camera gear or jewelry
- Tool boxes and power tools
- Cash / spare change

WHAT DO THIEVES DO WITH YOUR PROPERTY FROM YOUR VEHICLE?

Many things can be sold to other thieves or to someone "looking for a good deal". Other items can be sold for cash at pawn shops. Some thieves specialize in looking for purses or wallets. They will immediately make large ticket purchases on credit cards,

alter the victim's ID so they or a partner can forge checks. Identity theft has become a big business in the world of criminals and can cause an incredible amount of worry, inconvenience, and hardship for the victims.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A THEFT FROM MY VEHICLE

To deter a criminal from breaking into your vehicle, lock the doors and put valuables out of site preferably in the trunk, or bring them in the house. Thieves will break into any vehicle if they think there is something of value to be stolen from it. Thieves know there may be checkbooks, wallets, Blackberry's, I-pods or other valuable items in a briefcase or gym bag.

After removing valuables from view, lock your car doors. This will help to discourage some of the more casual thieves looking for an opportunity to steal. It will also help deter those criminals who go into unlocked vehicles to look for trunk or hood release buttons in order to steal auto parts or the valuables you have put into your trunk.

If you are parking in a lot at shopping centers, parks, or other public places, put your valuables in the trunk *before* you get there so watching thieves do not see you store them.