



PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

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CAR THEFT—CAN RUIN YOUR DAY!

The discovery is always jolting. You go to your driveway in the morning, ready to go to work, but your car is no where to be seen. You get off of the bus at the park and ride, and can't find your car. Or, you make a quick stop at a convenience store, only to see someone drive away in your car. You have become a victim of a car theft with a sinking then angry feeling that you did not expect.

Car thefts are all too common in Snohomish County, and many areas in the US. According to Detective Sergeant Jason Knott, the head of the Snohomish County Auto Theft Task Force (SNOCAT), between January through July 31, 2017 there were 1,742 car thefts reported in the county. That is a rate of 249 cars stolen per month.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) (<https://www.nicb.org/home>) ranks the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area 22nd in the nation for car thefts.

The top 10 stolen vehicles in Washington include vehicles produced before the year 2000:

1. Honda Accord (1997)
2. Honda Civic (1998)
3. Ford Pickup- Full Size (1999)
4. Acura Integra (1994)
5. Toyota Camry (1991)

6. Subaru Legacy (1996)
7. Chevrolet Pickup- Full Size (1997)
8. Honda CR-V (1999)
9. Toyota Corolla (1998)
10. Jeep Cherokee/Grand Cherokee (1994)

The vehicles on this list are reputed to be very good cars. But, they do not have the advanced security measures that have been incorporated into vehicles after the year 2000.

Sgt. Knott says that the number one factor to car theft is that the car is a 1990-2000 Honda.

The number two factor is that the car thief finds the key, fob, or valet key in the car. If a key or fob is in the car, then it does not matter how new or how many security features are designed into the car, the thief can easily drive off in someone else's car.

Sgt. Knott relates one example. One victim left the fob for his Bentley, parked in the driveway, in his Tesla, parked next to it. The car thief found the fob, and drove off with the Bentley.

7 cars are stolen in Snohomish County every day!



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MOTORCYCLE THEFT- KEEPING IT SAFE

Motorcycles are often attractive to thieves. Here are some tips to protect you motorcycle. And as with car theft prevention, use multiple techniques for best affect.

- Lock the ignition.
- Lock the forks.
- Add an audible alarm.
- Lock your motorcycle to a secure, stationary object such as a light pole.
- If traveling with other riders, lock motorcycles together.
- Uniquely mark your bike and take pictures of it so that you can show law enforcement.
- Add a GPS tracker.

For more tips, go to:

http://www.msf-usa.org/downloads/Prevent-ing_motorcycle_theft.pdf

CAR THEFT- PROTECTING YOUR TRANSPORTATION

Car manufacturers have improved the security of cars in a variety of ways since the 1990's. You can take measures to protect your older car. If your car is newer, with improved security, you still need to take precautions to ensure that a thief will not drive your car away.

The NICB recommends that all drivers take steps to prevent their vehicles from theft. It says that no one technique will guarantee that your vehicle will not be stolen. It suggests a "layered" approach.

The first layer is **Common Sense**. This is the easiest and least expensive technique and includes:

- Remove your keys from the ignition and take them with you.
- Lock your doors and close your windows.
- Park in a well-lit area.

The second layer, **Warning Device**, is a visible or audible device that lets a car thief know your car is protected and/or brings attention to the fact the it is being broken into. Some devices that you can use include:

- Audible alarms
- Steering column collars
- Steering wheel/brake pedal locks

- Brake locks
- Wheel locks
- Theft deterrent decals
- Identification markers in or on vehicle
- VIN etching
- Micro dot marking

The third layer, **Immobilizing Device**, prevents car thieves from bypassing your ignition. Some of these devices are provided with new cars such as with computer chips in ignition keys, others are devices that you can add to your vehicle. They include:

- Smart keys
- Fuse cut-offs
- Kill switches
- Starter, ignition, and fuel pump disablers
- Wireless ignition authentication

The final layer, **Tracking Device**, helps locate your vehicle in case it is stolen. One device is Lojack, that sends a radio signal that local police can re-



CAR THEFT- PROTECTING YOUR TRANSPORTATION CONT.

Some of the recommendations come built in to your car, Others are habits that you should adopt. And some, like taking your keys with you or locking your car, are essential habits. After all, an alarm or immobilizing device is not useful if the car thief has the key.

With the new high tech keys and fobs that ensure the car opens to only its owner there have been stories of devices that can intercept the signals between the car and the fob resulting in the car thief stealing the car. While the technology does exist, and some car thieves may use the technology, Sgt. Knott says the greater majority of thefts are ignitions that are defeated or keys are located during a vehicle prowl or left in a running vehicle .

One problem that comes up from time to time is a car thief steals a car with the title located in the glove box.

Each registered vehicle in the State of Washington comes with two documents from the state's Department of Licensing. One is the registration, that shows that the owner has paid the registration fees for the current year and shows ownership of the vehicle. The second document is the title which also shows the rightful owner of the vehicle. The title is also used to transfer title, or ownership, to another person.

If a thief finds the title in a car, he can sign over ownership to himself. Signing over ownership like this complicates recovery for the legitimate owner.

The best action you can take is to have the registration available with the car in case a police officer or a deputy asks to see it. Keep the title separate from the car in a safe place such as your safe at home or a safety deposit box at a bank.

Another problem is buying a stolen car online. The NICB offers a free online service that allows you to check if a vehicle has been reported stolen or has been reported as a salvage vehicle. Go to this link for the service- <https://www.nicb.org/theft-and-fraud-awareness/vincheck>.

Don't give a thief opportunity. People who steal take advantage of opportunities. That is true for burglars, for embezzlers, scammers, and most of all those who steal cars.

The security features designed into cars take away opportunities. Smart key fobs, The Club, alarms, Lojack tracking device, and ignition kill switches take opportunity away from the thief.

But all of that can be negated by leaving your keys or fobs in your vehicle. You do not have to take a dramatic action. All you have to do is to develop the habit of taking your keys and locking your vehicle. That is the simplest and most effective way to prevent car theft.

SNOCAT- FINDING THE CAR THIEVES

The Snohomish County Auto Theft Task Force (SNOCAT) is a multi-jurisdictional task force consisting of detectives from the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office, Marysville police department, the Washington State Patrol, and the Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

SNOCAT's mission is to reduce vehicle theft in Snohomish County through pro-active enforcement, apprehension of car thieves and increased public awareness.

For more about SNOCAT, go to:

<https://snohomishcounty.wa.gov/2687/Auto-Theft-SNOCAT>

Also, follow SNOCAT on Twitter at

[@SnoCoAutoTheft](https://twitter.com/SnoCoAutoTheft)



CAR THEFT- PREVENTING THEFT



PROTECTING YOUR VEHICLE FROM THEFT

What You Should Know

IN THE U.S.,
a vehicle
is stolen
every **45**
SECONDS



Nationally,
nearly
42% of stolen vehicles are
NEVER RECOVERED



Thieves can
STRIP A VEHICLE
of parts in
30 MINUTES or less



More than
\$5
BILLION The estimated
total value of
VEHICLES stolen
nationwide




PROTECT YOUR VEHICLE
from theft with these simple steps:

- Close and lock all windows and doors when you park
- Park in well-lit areas
- Never leave your vehicle while it's running
- Never leave keys or valuables in your vehicle

Vehicles most likely to be **STOLEN**



1. Honda Accord	6. Ford Econoline
2. Honda Civic	7. Nissan Altima
3. Chevy Silverado	8. Ford F250
4. Toyota Camry	9. Toyota Corolla
5. Ford F150	10. Chevy Impala

*Top 10 reported stolen vehicles in CY 2015

Sources: NHTSA and FBI

For more information on vehicle theft prevention and NHTSA, check out NHTSA.gov/theft.

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MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/289/Crime-Prevention>

NEWSLETTER INFO

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If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org

TIP LINES



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office: 425-388-3845

<http://snohomishcountywa.gov/303/Anonymous-Tips>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477