

# GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

May 2010

# AUTO THEFT

**AUTO THEFT** not only hurts you, but it hurts us all. From the rise in insurance rates to a feeling of being violated and vulnerable it's important to take steps to prevent this type of crime from happening to you. **Not only new expensive cars are stolen.** Older, more common cars are a regular target because of the ease to sell and fit parts. If you don't feel your vehicle is valuable to a car thief, think again, it may make for a easy ride or have easy parts to sell depending on the market.

### DID YOU KNOW...

One car is stolen every 19 seconds in the U.S.?



That's less time than it takes most people to unlock their car, put on their seat belt and start the engine.

More than two thirds of all auto thefts take place at night, and over half occur in residential areas.

The thief who drives your vehicle is 200 times more likely to have a serious accident with it than you are.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SAFEGUARD YOUR CAR...

Whether you leave your car for a few minutes or several hours, roll up the windows, lock the doors and take the key.

**A good thief can steal your car in 30 seconds!**

Lock your vehicle in your garage at home or use good lighting to park in the driveway.

Carry your registration with you. Don't leave any personal identification, keys or credit cards anywhere in the vehicle.



### THEFT PREVENTION DEVICES

#### Alarms

After years of false alarms, people stopped paying attention to the sound. There is no statistical evidence that alarms reduce auto theft. Any serious anti-theft device must do more than just make noise unless you use it to only alert you.

SERVICE-PRIDE-INTEGRITY



GARDEN CITY POLICE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

CITY DEPARTMENT  
PHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY- 911

POLICE 793-1700

DETECTIVE BUREAU 793-1710

CITY HALL 793-1600

21ST DIST. COURT 793-1680

BUILDING DEPT. 793-1650

CITY CLERK 793-1620

LIBRARY 793-1830

MAPLEWOOD CTR. 793-1850

PARKS & REC. 793-1880

## VEHICLE THEFT

### *Kill Switches*

A kill switch is a simple switch device that shuts off the engine's ignition system. A risk is that it may accidentally be activated by the driver, so placement is very important not only to you but also to conceal from a thief. Improperly installed switches can damage the vehicles' electrical system and possibly void any warranty.

### *Steering Wheel Locks*

Steering wheel locks are visible from outside the car and prevent the wheel from being turned more than a few degrees. A variation on the steering is the J-bar or grip lock, an

adjustable steel bar rod that hooks under the brake and locks to the steering wheel.

### *Collars*

Collars are devices that prevent the steering column from being stripped.

### *Etching Parts*

Many cars are stolen for parts. Professional thieves shy away from a vehicle that has had the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) etched into the doors, windows, windshield etc.

### *Anti-Theft Systems*

Starting at less than \$300 and going higher as options are added, anti-theft systems typically include siren alarms, starter disablers, motion sensors, remote control activation, panic

buttons and shock detectors on doors, windows, truck lids. A beeper can alert the owner when someone trips the system.

### *Note*

Many newer cars are equipped with a combination of anti-theft devices such as alarms, flashing lights, ignition kill switches, steering wheel locks, coded keys, etc. These used in combination with etching and prevention tips are the most effective deterrents.

Remember, spending money on anti-theft devices won't help if drivers don't follow the basic precautions of locking doors, taking the key, and activating the anti-theft device installed.

## CAR JACKING

Follow these tips to help reduce your chances of being car jacked. Walk with purpose, and stay alert.

- Approach your car with the key in hand. Look around and inside the car before getting in.
- Park in well-lighted areas, near sidewalks or walkways. Avoid parking near dumpsters, woods, large vans or trucks, or anything else that limits your visibility.
- Never leave valuables in plain view, even when the car is locked. Put them out of sight in the trunk.
- Keep doors locked and windows rolled up, no matter how short the distance or how safe the area.
- Look around, especially at places where you slow down or stop, such as garages and parking lots, intersections, self-service gas stations, and car washes, highway entry and exit ramps, and ATMs.
- Avoid driving alone, if possible. Travel with someone, especially at night.
- Don't stop to assist a stranger whose car has broken down. Help instead by driving to the nearest phone and calling police for help.
- When coming to a stop, leave enough room to maneuver around other cars, especially if you sense trouble and need to get away.

## CITY CRIME STATS

Arson 1  
Breaking & Entering 9  
Larceny 23  
Stolen Vehicles 10

Assaults 32  
Murder 0  
Drugs 9  
Property Damage 15

Robbery 1  
Public Peace 3  
Fraud 8