



CITY OF COLUMBIA

Police Department



Motor Vehicle Thefts HEAT (HELP Eliminate Auto Thefts)

PREVENTION

Common Sense

An unlocked vehicle with a key in the ignition is an open invitation to any thief, regardless of which anti-theft device you use. The common sense approach to protection is the simplest and most cost-effective way to thwart would-be thieves.

You should always secure your vehicle, even if parking for brief periods by:

Removing the keys from the ignition

- * Locking the doors
- * Closing all windows
- * Parking in a well-lit area

Warning Device

The second layer of protection is a visible or audible device which alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular second layer devices include:

- Audible alarms
- * Steering wheel locks
 - * Steering column collars
 - * Brake locks
 - * Wheel locks
 - * Theft deterrent decals

- * Identification markers in or on vehicle
- * Window etching
- * Laminated glass
- * Watch Your Car Program Sticker

Immobilizing Device

The third layer of protection is a device which prevents thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle.

Some electronic devices have computer chips in ignition keys. Other devices inhibit the flow of electricity or fuel to the engine until a hidden switch or button is activated.

Popular third layer devices include:

- * Smart keys
- * High security locks & keys
- * Fuse cut-offs
- * Kill switches
- * Starter, ignition and fuel disablers

Tracking Device

The final layer of protection is a tracking device which emits a signal to a police or monitoring station when the vehicle is reported stolen. Tracking devices are very effective in helping law enforcement

authorities recover stolen vehicles.

Passive and Active Anti-Theft Systems

Passive and active anti-theft devices are the two options available when considering an anti-theft system. Passive devices automatically arm themselves when the vehicle is turned off, the ignition key removed, or a door is shut. No additional action is required. Active devices require some independent physical action before they are set, such as pushing a button, or placing a "lock" over a vehicle component part. This physical action must be repeated every time the anti-theft device is set or it will not function.



What to do if your Vehicle is Stolen?

Report it to the police immediately. In addition, be ready to provide them with the vehicle make, model, year and color of the vehicle. This information can assist law enforcement authorities in recovering your vehicle.

To Report a Crime Call...

- Dispatch—252-2911

Police Headquarters...

TRU—545-3500

Emergency...

911