



**MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN
PRESENTS SAFETY TIPS FROM
THE BUFFALO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

While there is no guaranteed way to avoid incurring theft, these are some commonsense precautions and tips you can use to prevent theft from an automobile.

All auto break-ins usually have one thing in common: there's something left in the car worth stealing. Most larcenies from cars are "crimes of opportunity" that could be prevented by taking some preventative steps. The Buffalo Police department recommends the following:

- Don't leave valuables in your vehicle: You'd be surprised how often this happens, but individuals leave valuable items in plain sight all the time. If you leave items in your vehicle and they're visible, the chances your vehicle will get broken into, increase greatly.
- Place items out of sight BEFORE reaching your destination: Someone may be watching when you put your valuables under a seat or in the trunk and the moment you're gone, a thief could break into your car. So place those items in a safe place before you get to the park, beach, baseball game, etc. Valuable items that thieves target are GPS units, MP3 players, credit cards, money, packages and so forth. If you can't take the items with you, secure them in a safe place in your vehicle, like a locked glove compartment or your trunk.
- Avoid leaving packages or shopping bags out in the open: Lock them into your trunk, if you have to leave the vehicle unattended. Never open a trunk, fill it full of valuables, close it, and then just walk away.
- Lock ALL of your vehicle's doors: This is true even if you plan on only being gone for "just a second". Remember, it only takes seconds to steal items from your car. It's not uncommon, for thieves to walk down a row of parked vehicles, looking for unlocked doors. Also, make sure car windows aren't left open.
- Park in busy, well-lit areas: Pick a parking spot where there is a lot of activity. Auto thieves prefer breaking into cars in isolated areas.
- Don't leave a trace: Don't leave any sign that there might be valuables "out of sight" in your vehicle. For example: the suction cup on your dashboard, might tell thieves, that you have a GPS system in your vehicle. Leave nothing in plain view. Very few auto break-ins are "random". The thieves usually see something out in the open or hints of possible hidden valuables.

- Alarms or anti-theft devices work: Thieves are usually looking for the "easiest" target. If your car has an alarm, it could act as a deterrent. But don't make this common mistake: Just because you have an alarm, doesn't mean thieves won't break-in, IF you leave valuable items in plain sight.
- Don't leave spare keys in your vehicle: An experienced thief knows all the hiding places. Store spare keys elsewhere, possibly your wallet or purse.

One of the "hottest" items that thieves are targeting both locally and nationally, is the GPS system in your vehicle. It's very simple police say: "if you leave a GPS system in your car, the chances are it will be stolen". Here are few tips to prevent your satellite navigation system from being taken:

- Take the whole unit out of your vehicle including the mounting bracket. Don't leave your vehicle unattended with the GPS system in plain sight.
- Wipe the window shield so that the suction marks left from the system are wiped away.

If your vehicle is stolen or property is taken from the vehicle there are number of things you can and should do:

- Call police immediately at 911, provide a complete description of the items taken. Also provide license plate number, make and model of vehicle, year and color, plus VIN number and insurance company.
- Etch your driver's license number on all removable valuable items. Items such as audio equipment.
- Don't leave your driver's license or title in the vehicle.
- Keep a record of the VIN number, license plate number, and insurance information in your wallet or purse.
- Install a vehicle tracking and location system that can be activated after the vehicle is reported as stolen.

**IF YOU NEED THE POLICE DIAL 9-1-1
www.bpdny.org**