



# CITIZEN'S CRIME PREVENTION ASSOCIATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

## Automobile Theft Prevention

Every year thousands of dollars in merchandise is stolen from automobiles and the amount continues to grow. Added to this is the number of vehicles that are stolen or the parts that are stolen from vehicles and we can see that we have a growing problem in this area.

This does not only cause loss to the victims - most of which is never returned, but because of the increase in auto theft and theft from automobiles insurance costs are continually rising. Victims become bitter and angry. What they should be doing, however, is finding ways to prevent these crimes.

Thefts from automobiles mostly take place at night. In actual fact what these crimes have become are crimes of opportunity. You can reduce the chance of being the target of such an opportunity through prevention.

## Prevention

In order to ensure that you are not a victim, follow these steps:

- CLOSE all car windows and lock your vehicle any time you leave it.
- PLACE any valuables you must leave in your vehicle out of sight - preferably in the trunk.
- PARK your vehicle in areas well traveled by pedestrians.
- AVOID secluded areas.
- CONSIDER a vehicle burglar alarm if you live or work in a high risk area.
- INSTALL locking gas caps.
- REPORT suspicious persons in or around vehicles.
- MARK all valuables with your drivers licence number.
- PREVENT access to the vehicle with a coat hanger. This can be done by installing smooth door locking buttons.
- KEEP an inventory of all items and accessories with serial number for identification. Don't forget items such as the spare tire and the jack.
- CONSIDER mounting equipment such as stereos, radios, cellular phones etc. on removable brackets and locking them in the trunk or taking them with you. These items are prime targets for theft. They should also be engraved with your drivers licence number.



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## If You Are a Victim...

If you are a victim of car theft, be sure to act immediately. The longer you wait to report the crime, the more difficult it will be to recover your lost possessions.

- REPORT the crime immediately to your local police: either the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.
- DO NOT damage or remove evidence. Wait for the police to arrive.
- SUPPLY a list of items stolen. Be sure to have the appropriate serial numbers and engraved identification marks.

Crime prevention through opportunity reduction will help you enjoy your vehicle and its contents for many years. **Don't let anyone make you a victim of opportunity!**