



# Montgomery County Police

## THEFTS FROM VEHICLES

### Vehicle Security Advice

**This flyer is presented by the Montgomery County Police and your HOA to provide you with crime prevention tips.**

There have been a number of thefts from automobiles in the **WHEATON AREA** over the last month.

The property stolen has included laptop computers, briefcases, golf clubs, video cameras and other personal belongings. In most cases the offense has occurred as a result of the owner leaving the property on display and in plain view.

Over a quarter of all recorded crime is 'vehicle crime', which includes: stolen vehicles, theft from vehicles or theft of auto parts. The most common types of property stolen from vehicles are handbags, laptop computers, stereos and mobile phones.

If your car is stolen or broken into it could mean weeks of inconvenience as well as extra expense. It may be difficult to protect your car from a determined thief. Most thieves are opportunists and if they see valuables on the backseat or floorboard, they will break the glass and be off with the property in seconds. Motorists can prevent this type of crime simply by taking their valuables with them.

#### Basic security

- Never leave a car door unlocked, or a window or sunroof open, even when just going into a shop for a moment or two.
- Remove the ignition key and engage the steering lock, even when parking on your own property.
- If you have an alarm, turn it on every time you park.
- Never leave any property on display in your car. If you can't take it with you, lock it in the trunk.
- If you have a removal stereo, always take it with you. Make a note of the serial number and keep it in a safe place.
- If possible, park in a well-lit and busy location
- Do not leave credit cards or check books in the glove compartment. One in five stolen check and credit cards are taken from cars. Never leave your vehicle documents in the car - they could make it easier for a thief to sell it.
- If you see a suspicious person in the parking lot, please call 301-279-8000 to have the police respond. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.
- Audio alarms emit loud warning sounds when the door, hood or trunk are opened.

