When You Buy A Car...

- Be suspicious if the price is lower than normal. Hot cars are no bargains!
- Verify that the VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) plate is intact and has not been tampered with. Check it against the ownership documents.
- If possible, don't pay cash. Your check is your receipt that you bought the vehicle.
- Examine the title and registration papers carefully. If you have any doubts, don't buy.
- In many states, knowingly buying a stolen vehicle or even a STOLEN PART is a crime.

Anti-Theft Programs...

Organize a community partnership to raise awareness, install anti-theft devices, start an etching program, CAT or HEAT programs (voluntary registration of cars with the Police so they may stop a vehicle if seen during peak crime hours).

What people don't realize is that insurance fraud, like auto theft, increases everyone's premiums and places additional demands on insurance and law enforcement investigators.

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Crime prevention tips from:

The National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, N.W. Second Floor
Washington, D.C. 20006

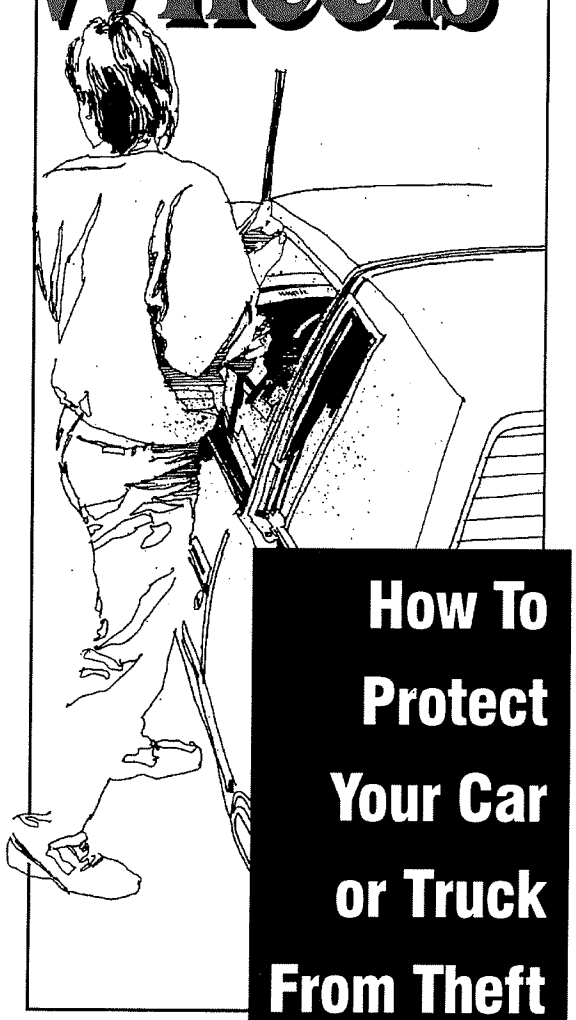
&
your local

Torrance Police Department
James D. Herren
Chief of Police
328-3456
Community Affairs
618-6391 or 618-6392

LOOK OUT FOR YOURSELF,
YOUR FRIENDS &
YOUR COMMUNITY
& HELP ME...

TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME®

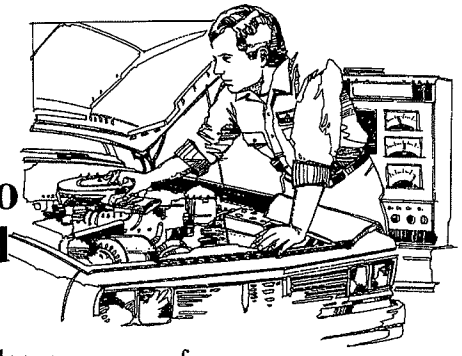
Keeping Your Wheels



How To Protect Your Car or Truck From Theft

Vehicle Theft Is A Big Problem

- 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.
- Approximately one out of every 119 registered motor vehicles was stolen in 1990.
- In fact, if auto theft were a legitimate business in the U.S., it would rank 50th among the Fortune 500 companies (*Motor Trend, January 1991*).
- More than 2/3 of all auto thefts take place at night, and over half occur in residential areas.
- The thief who drives your car away is 200 time 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 minute or for several hours, roll up the windows, lock it and take the key.

  Park in a busy, well lighted area.
- Carry your registration with you. Don't leave any personal identification documents, keys or credit cards anywhere in the vehicle.
- If you park in a commercial lot, leave only the ignition key and make certain that no identifying information is attached.
- Keep packages or valuables in the trunk. If you leave anything in the car, make certain it is covered and out of sight.
- Purchase stereo components, CBs or cellular phones that can be removed from their brackets and placed in a more secure location upon parking.

Theft Prevention Devices

ALARMS

After years of false alarms, people have stopped paying attention to alarms. There is no statistical evidence that they reduce auto theft. Any serious anti-theft device must do more than just make noise.

KILL SWITCHES

A kill switch is a simple toggle device that shuts off the engine's ignition system. A risk is that they may be accidentally engaged by the driver. Improperly installed switches can damage the electrical systems on newer cars and possibly void the 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 wheel lock 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.

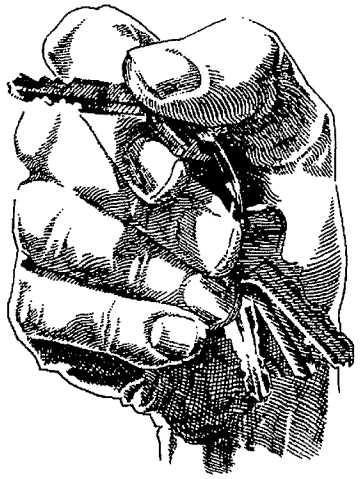
ETCHING PARTS

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 or trunk lids. A beeper can alert the owner when someone trips the system.

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

A CAVEAT

Spending money on anti-theft devices doesn't help if drivers don't follow the basic precaution of locking in their cars, taking the key and activating the anti-theft device they have installed.