



VEHICLE THEFT TOOLKIT

for Elected Officials
& Law Enforcement



Vehicle theft often conjures up an image, popularized by Hollywood movies, of thieves using a crowbar and screwdriver to enter and hotwire a car. However, such tactics, especially in newer vehicles, are largely obsolete due to enhancements in vehicle security and manufacturing.

As a result, combined with good law enforcement, vehicle thefts have sharply declined since its peak in 1991. Still, at a cost of over \$6 billion, nearly 800,000 automobiles are annually stolen by an increasingly sophisticated and brazen criminal element. Organized criminal and terrorist rings are turning to stolen cars to make big money or finance their operations by reselling them to unsuspecting buyers, shipping them overseas, or stripping them of their valuable parts.

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UNDERSTANDING VEHICLE THEFT

Both older and newer model cars are targets. In 2018, the ten most stolen automobiles ranged from the 1997 Honda Accord to the 2018 GMC Full Size Pickup. While carjacking, unauthorized vehicle tows, and key cloning are frequent occurrences, vehicle owners simply leaving an extra set of keys in their vehicle is all too common.

By the time you've read this, at least one vehicle has been stolen in the United States, and whenever a vehicle is stolen, we all pay. In addition to providing financial resources to organized criminal and terrorist rings, according to the Insurance Information Institute, about one-quarter of a typical comprehensive auto insurance premium goes to cover auto theft claims.

Fortunately, there are steps that you – a public or law enforcement official – could do to curb auto theft in your community.

HOW VEHICLES ARE STOLEN

Carjacking: The armed or strong-armed robbery of a vehicle

Towing: Stealing a vehicle by towing it away

Key cloning: Use of sophisticated technology to intercept and mimic key fob signals on push-button start vehicles

Second or Valet Key: Breaking into a vehicle and using the owner's second or valet key that has been left in the vehicle

Hotwiring: Starting the engine of a vehicle by short-circuiting the engine; limited to older models

Running Vehicles: Thieves steal vehicles left running on driveways, at gas stations, and other locations

WHY VEHICLES ARE STOLEN

To Be Resold: Stolen vehicles are re-tagged or cloned to sell to unsuspecting buyers

Parts: Vehicles are stolen to dismantle the vehicles and resell its parts

Export: Vehicles are stolen to be export for sale in a foreign country

Commission of Other Crimes: Vehicles are used in the commission of illegal acts

Transportation: The vehicle is stolen for basic transportation

Joy Rides: The vehicle is stolen for the thrill of vehicle theft

Insurance Fraud: The vehicle is reported stolen for purposed of collecting an insurance settlement

TRAINING



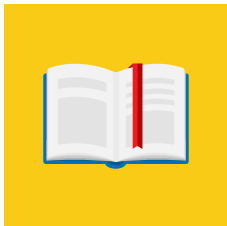
ONLINE:

NICB offers online courses, videos and downloads that are specific to vehicle theft. Course and video titles include: Vehicle Theft Fraud, Motorcycle Theft Fraud, Examining Vehicles in the Field, Vehicle Cloning, Identifying Stolen Vehicles on the Street and more. Law enforcement can access these online resources at: **NICBTraining.org**.



ONSITE:

NICB special agents are available to come to your department to conduct auto theft training. This can be in the form of a dedicated class or more informally at roll call. Contact your respective NICB regional office, listed at the end of this toolkit, to schedule. Or by completing the form at the following link: **nicblearning.wufoo.com/forms/training-request-form/**



INVESTIGATIVE GUIDEBOOKS:

NICB makes available, free to law enforcement personnel, its Vehicle Theft Claim Investigation Guide to assist law enforcement agents in conducting investigations of vehicle theft. Also, available is a pocket-sized version and vehicle identification manuals. To order, please contact NICB marketing at **800.447.6282**.

OPERATIONS

LICENSE PLATE READERS:

To augment law enforcement efforts, NICB contracts with vendors to scour the United States using license plate reader (LPR) technology to flag and recover stolen vehicles. Every year our efforts result in thousands of recovered vehicles. Your department can also utilize LPR technology to locate stolen vehicles. And no longer does your department have to devote countless hours waiting for the thief to return to the vehicle – just affix a tracker to car and catch-up to them when they are next on the move. Contact your respective NICB regional office for help implementing or improving a LPR program in your community.

BAIT CARS:

Bait cars are another tool some departments have used to capture car thieves. While some departments keep their bait cars under constant surveillance, it is not necessary for a successful bait car operation; the car can be disabled and remotely locked just prior to apprehension. For more information on bait cars, including the possibility of NICB facilitating the provision of a bait car, please contact your respective NICB regional office.

KEY READ EXAMINATION:

NICB offers a free service for law enforcement to read/examine keys on General Motors side-milled keys starting with model year 2010 to most present day models and BMW keys for certain model years. Key read examinations can provide the VIN of the vehicle to which the key is programmed, vehicle mileage the last time the key was used to start the vehicle, the number of keys currently programmed to the vehicle, and more. To utilize the key read examination program, please email keyreads@nicb.org or call 800.544.7083.



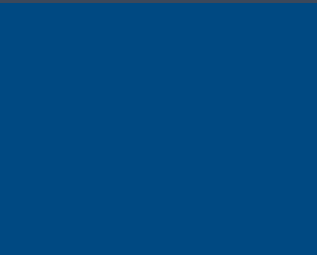
OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

INVESTIGATIVE ASSISTANCE:

NICB's Investigative Assistance Group is the 24/7 contact center for law enforcement agency inquiries for vehicle theft identification and investigations. The Investigative Assistance group can assist, at no cost, with secondary vehicle identifier locations, build-up/cross reference of partial VINs and component parts, vehicle shipping and assembly information on pre-1981 vehicles, and searching for information on vehicles or people that may have been involved in major crimes or insurance fraud schemes. To contact NICB Investigative Assistance please email IA@nicb.org or call 800.447.6282 ext. 7002.

CASE ASSISTANCE AND PREPARATION:

NICB special agents are on-hand to help with the investigation of any vehicle theft case, big or small. Additionally, we can help law enforcement agencies prepare cases and reports to present to prosecutors. We find this much appreciated by prosecutors, as it frequently expedites charges brought against alleged criminals. Contact your respective NICB regional office for case assistance.



ADMINISTRATION

COMPREHENSIVE CONSULTATION

The factors that affect vehicle theft rates and the ways to reduce those thefts are numerous. NICB special agents can meet with your law enforcement leadership and help study the issue and craft a unique strategy to bring down your community's vehicle theft rates. Contact your respective NICB regional office for help designing a vehicle theft game plan unique to your community.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

We know the law enforcement is operating on tight budgets. NICB at times can help provide the financial resources to give your agency that extra boost. Financial support can include facilitating bait cars, providing surveillance equipment, establishing faux-store fronts for the purchase of stolen vehicles and parts, and much more. Contact your respective NICB regional office for further inquiries.



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

AUTO THEFT PREVENTION AUTHORITY:

Twelve states plus the District of Columbia have established an auto theft prevention authority for the explicit purpose of combatting auto theft and vehicle insurance fraud. Most often the authorities are funded through a small surcharge on automobile insurance policies and are used directly by the authority or distributed to law enforcement agencies throughout the state for auto theft prevention efforts. To learn if your state has an auto theft prevention authority or assistance in starting one in your state, please contact NICB government affairs at **800.447.6282**.

VEHICLE THEFT TASK FORCE:

A vehicle theft task force is a more localized approach to fighting vehicle theft, and can be funded wholly or in part by an auto theft prevention authority, or from local revenue sources. While very large municipalities may be able to sustain their own task force, often the task force is comprised of multiple jurisdictions. Please contact NICB government affairs at **800.447.6282** for more information.

STATUTORY MODIFICATIONS:

If existing state laws are making it difficult to prosecute or punish vehicle thieves, existing statutory language might need to be modified. NICB government affairs may be able to assist in lobbying for changes to state law; contact NICB government affairs at **800.447.6282**.

HOT SPOTS & HOT WHEELS REPORTS

See which are this year's most stolen vehicles and top places for vehicle theft at [nicb.org/news/reports-statistics](https://www.nicb.org/news/reports-statistics).

8.6% increase in vehicle thefts from 2014 to 2018.

HOT WHEELS



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

NICB makes available for free a number of auto theft related public service announcements (PSAs). Governmental bodies or law enforcement agencies may use these PSAs on their website, public access television stations, social media, or other mediums. To access NICB's library of PSAs, please visit: nicb.org/news/psas.

CONSUMER BROCHURES:

At a very low cost (or free to download), NICB makes available several consumer oriented brochures and posters related to vehicle theft. Law enforcement can distribute these brochures throughout the community to educate the public on how to prevent vehicle theft. Newly available are “you're lucky I'm a cop”

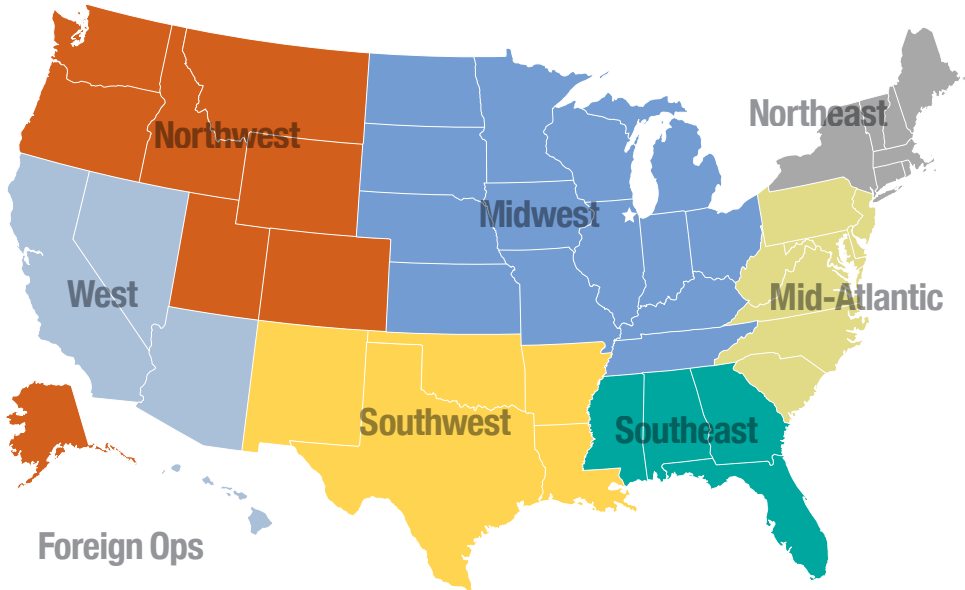
leaflets law enforcement can place on or in unlocked vehicles. Brochures, at cost, can be co-branded. To order brochures, please visit nicb.org/prevent-fraud-theft/order-brochures-posters or call NICB marketing at **800.447.6282**.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS:

Many communities that have experienced an uptick in auto thefts have conducted public advocacy campaigns to educate the public. Communities have done everything from posting signs in public places reminding car owners to lock their doors to free VIN etching to billboards, and more. If your community needs assistance planning and executing a public advocacy campaign, please contact NICB public affairs at **800.447.6282**.



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