



Media Contact:

Media@TxDMV.gov

(512) 465-1484

Customer Contact:

AskDMV@TxDMV.gov

1-888-368-4689



Don't make it a happy holiday for car thieves *Texans can fight back against motor vehicle crimes*

(AUSTIN, Texas – November 25, 2020) Protect your ride and what's inside! It doesn't matter what kind of car you drive. All vehicles are a potential target of motor vehicle theft this holiday season. In Texas, almost 77,000 vehicles were stolen last year, and nearly 200,000 vehicles are burglarized each year. The losses to Texans are staggering – almost \$1.5 billion.

“Protect your investment,” says Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (MVCPA) Chairman and Galveston County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Tommy Hansen. “Over 80% of communities that have a motor vehicle theft taskforce funded by MVCPA reported that keys left in cars and cars unlocked were the major contributors to these crimes.”

Stolen cars disappear across the border, out of the ports or end up at local illegal “chop shops” every day. Motor vehicle theft would plummet if people did not leave their cars unlocked or leave their keys in the car. Many thieves use stolen vehicles in other criminal activities, such as human trafficking, drug smuggling and robbery.

MVCPA reminds Texans: If You Like It – Lock It. Locking your car is the most effective way to prevent burglary of your car. Remember to take or hide your things. Many law enforcement agencies say criminals are targeting vehicles in neighborhoods and parking lots likely to contain weapons or credit cards, which are the top priority for quick money from burglary. Don't go willingly down “Victim Lane.” Follow these steps for a safe and secure holiday:

- Lock your vehicle and take your keys.
- Take your things. If you cannot, then hide valuables from plain sight to avoid attracting thieves.
- Never hide a second set of keys in or on your vehicle. Thieves can find these easily.
- Park in well-lighted areas or attended lots.
- Never leave your vehicle running unattended, even if you will only be away for a moment.
- Don't leave documents with important personal details in your vehicle.
- Park with your wheels turned toward the curb and use your emergency brake, making your vehicle harder to tow away. Wheels should also be turned to the side in driveways and parking lots.
- If you have a garage, use it. Lock your garage as well as your vehicle doors. Your vehicle may be more vulnerable when you park outside.
- Consider after-market theft prevention devices compatible with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Visit www.txwatchyourcar.com for more information, or email AskMVCPA@txdmv.gov. To see a full list and contact information of Motor Vehicle Theft Taskforces in your part of the state, see www.txdmv.gov/mvcpa-grantees.



[Subscribe](#) to receive TxDMV news releases via email or text message.

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles registers and titles motor vehicles, licenses motor vehicle dealers, credentials motor carriers, issues oversize/overweight permits, investigates complaints against dealers and motor carriers, and awards grants to law enforcement agencies to reduce vehicle burglaries and thefts. Learn more at www.TxDmv.gov.