

## Reporting Suspicious Activity

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Call the police immediately when you:

- ✓ See activity that “just doesn’t look or feel right”
- ✓ See someone looking into cars or ducking around them
- ✓ Hear breaking glass
- ✓ See someone tampering with a car
- ✓ See a person carrying tools or property that doesn’t fit the setting in your neighborhood

Try to get a description of the suspect(s) and their vehicle. If they flee from the site, watch to see what direction they go. Remember, *never put yourself in danger*. **Call 9-1-1!**

**You are not bothering the police when you call to report suspicious activity!** It is our job to detect and apprehend criminals. Because we can’t be in everyone’s neighborhood 24 hours a day, we need your help in reporting activity that is suspicious to you. After all, who knows your neighborhood better than you!

We’d much rather come to your neighborhood and find out everything is okay, than be called by your neighbor after they have been victimized.

If you locate property that may have been stolen or you discover that you have been the victim of a theft, don’t hesitate or put off calling **9-1-1**. By reporting crimes, it helps police identify possible patterns.

## What Additional Security Measures can I take?

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Outdoor security lighting, left on from dusk to dawn, is inexpensive and helps to displace such crimes as theft, vandalism, and burglary. Car alarms may increase the risk that a prowler may be detected or caught.

You can increase the chances of your property being recovered if it is stolen by recording the serial numbers of electronics or marking property with an Operation ID number. Operation ID is a nationwide program. Stolen property marked with Operation ID numbers can be traced back to the owner, no matter where in the United States the property is recovered. Operation ID numbers are available at no charge from the Plymouth Police Department. Call 763-509-5147 for an Operation ID number.

For additional crime prevention information, please call 763-509-5147.



*Adding Quality to Life*

## Plymouth Police Department

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# Theft from Vehicles



## A Guide to Prevention

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Information on how to reduce the chance of your vehicle being broken into.

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## **Theft from Vehicles is on the rise**

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Theft from vehicles has dramatically increased over the past several years.

The popularity of expensive sound systems, cellular phones, GPS units, portable music players, CDs, and portable DVD players (all of which are quickly and easily stolen), has seemed to encourage car prowlers.

The Plymouth Police Department would like to help you avoid the frustration and inconvenience of being the victim of this crime. Please take a few minutes to read this brochure and then pass the information on to friends and neighbors.

## **Common Methods of Entry into Vehicles**

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- 🔓 Unlocked doors or open windows
- 🔓 Smashing or prying windows
- 🔓 Prying or removing locks

## **The Most Likely Targets for Theft**

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**FACT:** Most theft from vehicle crimes occur in residential areas -- in the victim's driveway, parking stall, or garage.

- 🔓 Vehicles with property left in plain view
- 🔓 Vehicles with expensive stereo equipment
- 🔓 Unattended vehicles left running at day care centers, convenience stores, in the drive way, etc.

## **Property Most Often Stolen from Vehicles**

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- ✓ GPS Units
- ✓ Purses / wallets
- ✓ Stereo systems and related equipment
- ✓ Cell phones
- ✓ Lap top computers
- ✓ Brief cases and gym bags
- ✓ Cameras / portable music players / other electronic gear
- ✓ Tools
- ✓ Spare change
- ✓ Garage door openers

## **What do Thieves do with the Property that They Steal?**

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Thieves often sell stolen property to other thieves or to someone who is "looking for a deal." Stolen property may wind up on internet auction sites or property can also be sold for cash at pawn shops.

Some thieves specifically look for purses to steal. They may alter the victim's ID. They may use stolen checks and credit cards to make large purchases. Or they may attempt to further steal the victim's identity. This is a devastating experience for a victim, often causing an undue amount of hardship, worry, and inconvenience.

Thieves don't care about their victims or the impact that their crime has upon them. Their

point of view is "Why should I pay for something when I can steal it?"

## **How Can I Prevent a Theft from my Vehicle?**

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To reduce the opportunity for crime and deter a criminal from breaking into your car, **ALWAYS LOCK YOUR VEHICLE AND KEEP PROPERTY OUT OF PLAIN VIEW.** Locked vehicles discourage the "casual" thief who preys upon the easiest opportunity to steal. Locked vehicles also discourage criminals who want to use the trunk release button to gain access to the trunk and the property stored inside.

Thieves will break into ANY vehicle if they think that there is something of value to be stolen from it. Checkbooks, wallets, watches, calculators, and other small electronics are often kept in briefcases. Jewelry, keys, cash, and portable music players are often kept in gym bags. Reduce the opportunity for crime and keep all your property out of plain view. Bring your property into your home at night.

## **Dial 9-1-1 Immediately to Report Suspicious Activity**

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Theft from vehicles occurs on every day of the week and at all hours of the day. A theft from your vehicles can occur when you least expect it: dropping the kids off at day care, in busy parking lots, and in "secure" underground parking lots.

If you see people looking into cars, "hanging out" in parking areas for no reason, hear breaking glass, or see anything else unusual, call **9-1-1** immediately! By reporting suspicious activity, you may prevent someone from becoming a victim or you may help the police apprehend a criminal.