

## DRIVE SMART

Every day of the week someone somewhere falls victim to a bad guy while going about their daily routine.

Don't let your guard down. Stay alert and aware of your surroundings, especially if you are traveling in an unfamiliar neighborhood.

Make sure you give yourself enough time to reach your destination and you won't be in a hurry.

Being in a rush will only cause you to become frustrated and may cause you to drive in a reckless fashion. Remember the Rules of the road.

We don't want you to be paranoid, but you need to be prepared for any situation while traveling on a highway or even in your own neighborhood.

Follow these steps to help you be prepared for an emergency

- Get directions before you set out to a new destination.
- Use either a map source via the Internet, or call ahead to the local police department requesting directions from a major highway in the area.
- Keep your doors locked and remember to wear your seat belt at all times.
- If you are bumped by another motor vehicle and suspect something is out of sorts, drive to an area where people are present or use your cell phone to summon the police.

- Bad guys have been known to use this minor collision to lure you out of your car.
- Bad guys don't wear a sign on them and may appear to be legitimate people that blend in the community.
- If someone is approaching your motor vehicle on foot and you are stopped in traffic, make sure your windows are shut.  
Be prepared to make a maneuver to move out of the stopped traffic in order to get away from this person.  
He may be prepared to smash out the passenger window in order to steal your purse which is probably on the seat.
- Also be aware of the fact that young males have been known to commit acts of vehicular high-jacking as an initiation into a street gang.
- If things go from bad to worse, and you can't drive away, start blowing your horn to draw attention to you.
- Consider purchasing a remote controlled panic alarm. These alarms can be installed inexpensively and allow you to sound the horn or a siren if someone comes up on you while you are approaching your car.
- Just because you are traveling in a neighborhood you believe to be crime free, don't let your guard down.

- Bad guys like to travel outside of their neighborhood as they have stolen almost everything there is to steal in theirs.
- The police know them on a first name basis and they know nice people like you are not expecting anything to happen in "their neighborhood".
- If you break down use your cell phone to call for assistance, don't approach strangers asking for assistance!
- Remember to get prior directions and don't stop in strange places asking for directions. The nice guy who offers to lead you to the address you are looking for may lead you into an alley and take advantage of you.
- If you see something that appears to be suspicious or out of the ordinary, simply call the police and make them aware of it. The police can't be at all places at all times.
  - You are the community and need to take a stand and get involved for what does or doesn't happen in your community.
  - If you see someone in distress call the police using 911 if available, don't assume the next guy is going to call. ***You be the next guy, as several probably have already passed up the person in need.***
  - You don't need to stop and offer to help, just make the call. Stopping to help a

stranger may be just another way to lure you into a situation that can go from you being a Good Samaritan to you being a victim of a crime in a heart beat.

- If you decide to stop and help be prepared for things to go bad, this way if everything goes OK. At least you were prepared for the worst.

### Park Smart

Too often drivers leave their cars parked and give little if no thought to the possibility of their car being stolen.

Please review the crime prevention methods outlined below and follow them !

- Park your vehicle as close to an open business as possible, so the thief may be detected and deterred.
- Park in a well lighted area and remember that you may be parking your vehicle during daylight, but returning after dark.
- Do not leave any valuables in plain view inside the passenger area such as a radar detector or cell phone. Thieves sometimes target just the valuables inside the vehicle and haven't yet gained the experience to steal the car.
- Lock all of the windows and doors when leaving the vehicle unattended.
- Activate alarm system, kill switch, or other theft prevention device that locks the steering

wheel. An alarm system might even get you a discount on your vehicle insurance premium.

- Think about a tracking device that is installed by a authorized dealer. Once the theft is reported a signal is emitted from the stolen car that can be monitored by the police, enabling them to zero in on the stolen vehicle.
- Have the information available for the police in the event your car is stolen. The police need the vehicle identification number and state license number.
- If parking your vehicle with a valet service make sure the valet employee, convincing you to leave your vehicle with him, is in fact an employee of the valet service. It won't be the first time a unsuspecting motorist left their vehicle with someone they assumed was the valet guy, until they returned for the vehicle.

In the winter months when the temperature dips into single digits, motorists are quick to leave their car unattended for "just a minute" to get a cup of coffee at a local convenient store or run in to pay for gasoline at a quick serve gas station. Not a good idea, as this practice has just given anyone the opportunity to drive away with your car, no experience necessary.

This has been a good source of vehicle thefts for the thief that needs a one way ride.

**Never leave a child unattended in your vehicle as this is a recipe for disaster.**

Don't let your guard down wherever you

travel. Thieves like to travel to neighborhoods that they are not known by your local police until they have an occasion to get to know one another.

The police need your help to reduce the number of vehicles stolen and burglarized.

Carry a cell phone and use it to alert the police when you suspect something is out of the ordinary.

**You are the eyes and ears of your community.**