

Don't Become an Auto Theft Victim

Every 30 seconds, a motor vehicle is stolen in the United States. Using Federal Bureau of Investigation statistics, the National Insurance Crime Bureau reports that annual property losses from these thefts are approximately \$5 billion. Although technology and aggressive law enforcement actions have lowered the auto theft rate in recent years, you should still be cognizant of this loss exposure. The following tips may prove helpful in reducing the chances that your vehicle or property in it may be stolen.

- When temporarily leaving your vehicle, never leave it running or with the keys in the ignition.
- Always lock your car and roll up the windows, even if it is in your driveway. If you have a garage, park your car in it, and close and lock the garage door.
- Park in busy, well-lit areas.
- When purchasing auto stereo equipment, choose items that can be removed and locked in the trunk.
- When using valet parking or taking your car in for repairs, leave only the ignition key with the attendant.
- Turn your wheels sharply toward the curb when parking since this makes it extra difficult for thieves to tow the vehicle. Always use your emergency brake, and leave the transmission in park or in gear.
- Look into various antitheft devices for your auto. Ask about auto insurance discounts for antitheft devices, including alarms and window etchings.

[International Risk Management Institute, Inc., August 2011](#)