

According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), the nation's leading non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to preventing, detecting and defeating insurance fraud and vehicle theft, two vehicles are stolen every minute in the United States. Car thefts can occur anytime—at random on different days of the week and times of the day. Auto thefts occur with greater frequency where large groups of cars are parked for extended periods of time, such as shopping centers, colleges, sporting events, movie complexes or large apartment complexes.\*

NICB's annual Hot Spots list tracks the cities that lead the nation in auto thefts. While 52 percent of stolen vehicles are found, many unrecovered autos are shipped overseas and sold on the black market, stripped at a chop shop and sold for parts or resold to unsuspecting consumers, according to the NICB.

Precautionary measures can minimize your chances of becoming a victim of auto theft. Here are some tips you can use to minimize the likelihood that you will be a victim:

- Never leave your car running unattended.
- Never leave any keys in the car or ignition—even inside a locked garage, or in hide-a-key boxes.
- Always close your windows and lock the car—even if it is parked in front of your house.
- Never leave valuables or packages in plain view—even if your car is locked.
- When possible, park in high-traffic and well-lit areas.
- Install a mechanical device that locks the steering wheel, column or brakes.
- Consider a security / tracking system, such as a *LoJack*, *Teletrac* or *OnStar*.
- Never leave personal identification documents, such as the vehicle ownership title or credit cards, in your car.
- Leave only the ignition key, when leaving your car with a valet, attendant or mechanic.