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You Better Watch Out - Car Thieves May Be After Your Holiday Gifts

AUSTIN— During the holiday season, Santa may not be the only one watching you. Car thieves may be watching you and your car, especially if it is filled with holiday gifts and other valuables left in plain sight. Consumers need to be aware that the holidays are a prime time for thieves to strike.

Every 2 ½ minutes in Texas, another vehicle is broken into and the contents stolen. In 2008, thieves committed 259,705 burglary of motor vehicle offenses, including motor vehicle parts, accounting for an economic loss totaling over \$184,000,000 in Texas.

"The holidays should be filled with happiness, spending time with family and friends and shopping for that perfect gift, not worrying about car thieves," said Charles Caldwell, director of the Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority. "During the busy holiday shopping season, shoppers may overlook common sense precautions, especially when dealing with crowded parking lots and rushing from store to store."

This holiday season hundreds of law enforcement task force representatives, funded by the Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), will be out in their communities, reminding Texans that where they are, car thieves are so they need to take better safety measures to secure their valuables.

"There are a few easy steps that can help make sure your holiday gifts wind up in the right hands," said Caldwell. "In addition to parking in well lit areas, you need to hide your gifts, lock your car, and take your keys."

About Us

The Texas Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), supports a statewide network through grants, theft reduction initiatives, and public awareness/education. Since its inception in 1991, ABTPA has funded and managed 485 grants which have reduced motor vehicle theft by 61%. For more information on ABTPA and prevention tips, go to www.txwatchyourcar.com or call (512) 374-5101. Fan us on Facebook.

The Texas Department of Vehicles (TxDMV) is responsible for vehicle registration and titling, issuing motor carrier operating authority, motor carrier enforcement, licensing vehicle dealers, and awarding law enforcement agencies grants to reduce auto theft and increase public awareness. Visit www.TxDMV.gov for more information about the state agency.

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