

ABTPA Public Awareness Overview



Much of the reduction in Texas' automobile theft rates is attributed to the ABTPA's WATCH YOUR CAR campaign, ABTPA's public awareness and education program launched in 1993. WATCH YOUR CAR is a statewide multi-media campaign consisting of TV and radio public service announcements (PSAs), billboards, brochures, posters, and annual reports.

The WATCH YOUR CAR campaign has won a variety of awards since its inception 10 years ago. State, national, and international honors include 9 Tellys, The Texas Public Relations Society of America's Silver Spur Award, and 3 Best of Texas from the Texas Public Relations Association. Because of its effectiveness, the WATCH YOUR CAR campaign has proven to be a resource for other states. Maryland, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and for example, have purchased the rights to use the WATCH YOUR CAR PSAs. The Canadian province of British Columbia has purchased the rights to these commercials. The WATCH YOUR CAR logo is also being used, with ABTPA's permission, by the U.S. Department of Justice in their recently created national vehicle registration program.

In 2007, ABTPA began laying the groundwork for a new public awareness initiative. This advertising and public awareness campaign will be the largest from the Authority since launching the successful WATCH YOUR CAR campaign in 1993 and will place responsibility for reducing vehicle theft literally in the hands of consumers.

Here's why: Of the almost 100,000 vehicles stolen in Texas every year, roughly half are the result of Texans leaving their keys in the ignition. The YOU HOLD THE KEY campaign points out to Texans in no uncertain terms the consequences of such actions, both in terms of what thieves do with stolen vehicles and the subsequent possible refusal of insurance companies to honor policies that would replace those vehicles or pay for any damages.

The objectives of the campaign are to:

- Increase public awareness among Texans about auto burglary and theft
- Inform Texans about the consequences of leaving their keys in the car
- Decrease auto burglary and theft by educating Texans about steps they can take to prevent burglary and theft from happening to them.