

Putting a dent in automobile theft with AutoFind

Recovery of stolen vehicles is an important part of reducing the effects of automobile theft. Insurance Bureau of Canada has joined forces with police services in Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Halifax to implement the AutoFind program, which uses license plate scanning technology to compare the plates of parked vehicles against those of vehicles previously reported stolen. If a match is registered, the vehicle's status as stolen is confirmed and the police begin recovery procedures.

In the first 18 months of its operation, the AutoFind program was responsible for the recovery of over 1,650 vehicles, representing an actual cash value of \$11.5 million. Close to 70% of the vehicles were recovered within 15 days.

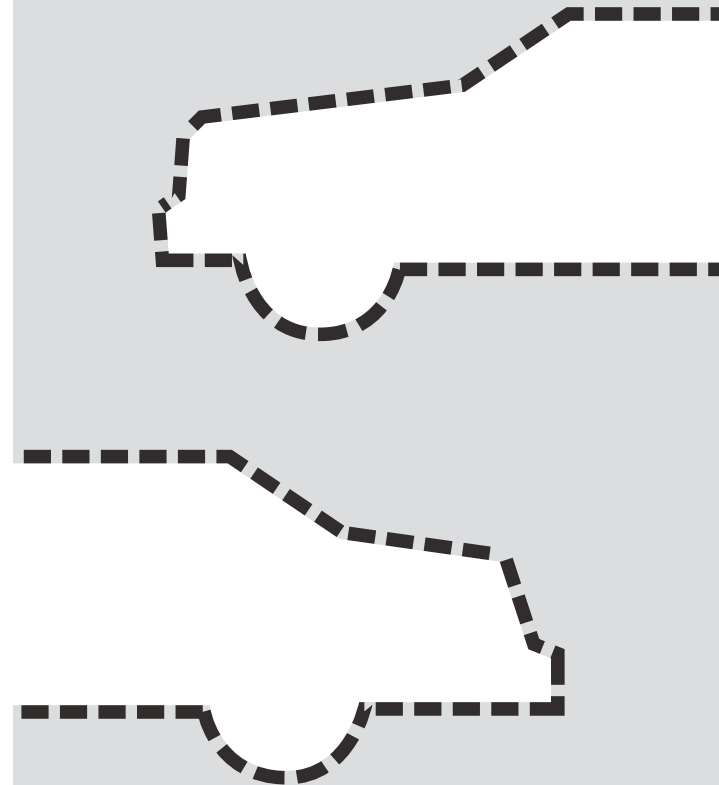
For more information on automobile theft, and a list of the most commonly stolen vehicles, visit IBC's website: www.ibc.ca or contact us:

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Representing the companies that insure your home, your car, your business.

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AUTOMOBILE THEFT: It's costing everyone too much.



In Canada, a vehicle is stolen every three minutes. That's close to 500 vehicles a day.

At this rate, automobile theft is costing over \$1 billion a year in Canada.

Unfortunately, you're footing the bill. As a policyholder, you are forced to pay for these criminal acts through your automobile insurance premiums.

By focusing on prevention, you can help to decrease the price you, and other policyholders like you, must pay to cover the costs of automobile theft.

And the first step in preventing automobile theft is to acknowledge that it can happen to you.

A professional can steal your vehicle in just 30 seconds – without the key. Protect your vehicle from theft with a few simple precautions:



Always roll up your vehicle's windows, lock the doors and pocket the key.

Never leave your vehicle unattended while it is running.

If you have a garage, use it and lock the door as well as your vehicle.

Never leave your car keys in plain view or in an easily accessible area.

Keep your vehicle registration certificate and proof of insurance on you at all times. Don't leave these documents in your glove compartment.

Always park your vehicle in a well-lit area.

Never leave valuable objects or packages in full view. Put them in the trunk.

Give only your ignition key to a parking lot attendant. Keep all other keys with you.

Inform police, or call the IBC TIPS Line at 1-877-IBC-TIPS, if you see vehicles or vehicle-related activities that look suspicious.

GIVE YOURSELF ADDED PROTECTION:

■ An effective theft deterrent system is vital to delaying and discouraging thieves. An approved electronic immobilizer should always be at the core of any vehicle theft deterrent system. An electronic immobilizer is a device that arms automatically when your vehicle is switched off and prevents the vehicle from being started without the key. An IBC-approved immobilizer meeting the Canadian Standard cuts three vital circuits – the starter, the ignition and the fuel pump. If you are buying a new vehicle, talk to your dealer about immobilizers.

For a listing of all vehicles with immobilizers meeting the Canadian Standard (also known as ULC-S338-98), visit www.ibc.ca.

- Remember, the security of immobilizer systems is often compromised when after-market remote-starter systems are installed.
- Have the windows and major components of your vehicle etched with your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) by an after-market company.
- Be cautious of "too-good-to-be-true" offers to buy a vehicle. Don't become a victim of fraud.

Who steals our vehicles? Why?



About half of all stolen vehicles are used to commit another crime or are driven – often recklessly – for simple purposes of transportation (this is called 'destination theft'). In these cases, the thieves are usually amateurs who take advantage of owner negligence by grabbing the first vehicle they can find that's been left unsecured.

In the other half of cases, vehicles are stolen by professional thieves involved in organized crime rings.

Some theft rings steal vehicles to order.

That is, a specific make and model of vehicle is scouted and stolen, then often resold at an incredibly low price. The new owner is typically in for a rude surprise, because the ring will often steal the vehicle back and resell it to someone else, or the vehicle will be seized by police.

"Chop shops" strip stolen vehicles and sell off components, often to legitimate businesses that are unaware the parts are stolen. This is a big business that accounts for millions of dollars a year in profits for criminals.

Theft rings under the control of organized crime frequently export stolen vehicles for sale overseas. The huge profits from this activity are used to finance other criminal activities, including drug trafficking, money laundering and terrorism.