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Midland Police Work Auto Burglaries with LeadsOnline



by Diane Tuazon
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MIDLAND - Leaving your car unlocked can be risky.

"The stereo systems, the boomboxes, if it's visible it may not get stolen today, but sooner or later it's going to get stolen," Sgt. Jim Crouse with the Midland Police Department, said.

The Midland Police Department has seen an increase in auto burglaries within the past year. Out of the burglaries reported, more than half were because people left their doors unlocked.

"217 were unknown, but the unknown are more likely to be in the unlocked category. Which is going to put it in nearly three quarters of all the auto burglaries," Sgt. Crouse said.

What do thieves do with the belongings they take from people's cars?

They try to sell them for a little extra cash at pawn shops, that's if they're able to get away with it. "If it doesn't match the ID of the person, we don't take it, and things with serial numbers taken off of them, we don't take either," Pawn Shop Manager Don Stanford, said.

Don Stanford says his store works closely with the police when it comes to tracking down stolen items. "LeadsOnline get a copy of everything we do. They go online and can identify items or if they have a suspects name," Stanford said.

For Midlander Justin Fischer, double checking and making sure his doors are locked gives him peace of mind. "It's getting way out of hand. I've got 2 kids. I hate to see any of my things or my children's things get stolen," Fischer said.

Some say they're doing the best they can to keep thieves away from their valuables.

"If my alarm goes off, my little key pad will go off and then I'll be out here in a second, I'm not worried about mine," Car owner Kelly Deary, said.

"Try to keep security lights on, always make sure the doors are locked; just always try to keep it lit out here," Fischer said.

Sgt. Crouse says it's not just car stereos and GPS devices that thieves are interested in, but garage door openers as well.

"Take that inside because you're going to be hit again because now they have a key to your house using the garage door opener, we encourage people to take it with them; it'll save you in the long run," Sgt. Crouse said.

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