



## **AUTO BURGLARY**

The St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office investigated **255** auto burglaries in 2010. **55%** of these crimes occurred in unlocked vehicles. Here are three simple tips to follow that can help you avoid becoming a victim.

- **Don't leave valuables in your car.** That sounds like "common sense", but drivers/passengers do leave items of value in plain view every day. If you leave valuable items visible in your car, your car is an easy target. If possible, lock them in the trunk out of sight. It is always better to do this before you arrive at your destination. If you have an after-market stereo/CD-player with a removable faceplate, remove it. Without the faceplate, the unit is less attractive/useful to many thieves, and harder to sell to other criminals. If the unit can be pulled, pull it and take it with you. Just covering a valuable radio (*or ANY valuables in your car*) with something (*like a blanket or towel*) to hide it will probably only draw thieves' attention.
- **Lock ALL your vehicle's doors and shut windows** even if you plan to be gone for only a brief time. Every year, there are items stolen from unlocked vehicles where the owner was only going to be gone "just for a second". It only takes seconds to steal your stuff! It is common for thieves to walk by parked vehicles and check vehicle doors to see if they are unlocked. Don't leave **any** window open or even cracked open, including vent/wing windows and sunroofs.
- **Mark your valuables.** We suggest inscribing/engraving a "personal identifier" on all valuables. **DO NOT** use your social security number (identity theft) — use your driver's license (*DL*) number, prefaced by your DL "state", such as "FL1217454928". With this marking, law enforcement can trace your valuables back to you. This dramatically increases the chances of being reunited with your stolen valuables.

### **WE CAN HELP:**

- If you witness suspicious activity, please report it to 9-1-1 immediately. Be sure to include a detailed description of what you see.
- Contact the Crime Prevention Unit for ways to mark and secure your valuables.
- If you plan to be on vacation, SLSO deputies can keep an eye on your vehicles and residence. Contact the Crime Prevention Unit or the Patrol Operations Division at 772-462-3320 to request a Close Patrol.

Need more information? Please contact the Crime Prevention Unit at 772-871-5303.  
St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office  
*"Raising the Standard... Through Community Partnerships"*