

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, January 24, 2014

GET TIPS ON PREVENTING VEHICLE THEFT DURING THE 2014 WASHINGTON AUTO SHOW

Visitors to the 2014 Washington Auto Show will be able to do more than just check out the latest in new automobiles and accessories. They can also get valuable information and resources on how to protect their vehicles from theft. The safety tips are courtesy of the MPD. The Washington Auto Show runs from Friday, January 24, through Sunday, February 2, in the Washington Convention Center. Members of the MPD's Auto Theft Unit and the Washington Area Vehicle Enforcement (WAVE) team, as well as other area law enforcement agencies will be passing out safety tips and information on how to reduce the chances of your vehicle being stolen.

In 2013, 2,633 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, according to preliminary statistics. While there was an eight percent decline in 2013 compared to 2012, far too many cars are stolen each year. To help protect automobiles from theft, motorists are encouraged to follow some steps to make your car – and the valuables in it – less attractive to thieves. The common-sense approach to protection is the simplest and most cost effective way to avoid would-be thieves. You should always secure your vehicle, even if you're parking for "just a minute." Do this by:

- Removing your keys from the ignition.
- Locking all of your doors.
- Closing all of your windows.
- Parking in a well-lit area.
- Never leaving your engine running and vehicle unlocked while you run into your home, a convenience store or anywhere else.

Also, a visible or audible device will alert thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular devices include audible alarms, steering wheel locks, steering column collars, theft deterrent decals, and tire locks.

WITH THE COLDER WEATHER HERE, DON'T MAKE YOUR VEHICLE AN EASY TARGET

With colder temperatures taking hold in DC, there's something that police officers are on the lookout for: motorists who leave their vehicles running while unattended. In 2013, over 2,600 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, according to preliminary statistics. And while it is impossible to tell how many auto thefts are the result of running vehicles left unattended, national statistics show that more than 20 percent of stolen autos had the key left in the ignition. As colder temperature settle in, some drivers will be tempted to run their vehicle to warm it up, while they remain indoors. Other motorists may leave their vehicles running while they dash into a convenience store or other location. Their reasoning: they will be away from their cars for only a "brief" minute or two. In either instance, the practice is unwise, unsafe and illegal in the District of Columbia. Some auto thieves need as little as a minute to break into

» For more auto theft prevention and other safety tips, go to:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

» Get more information about the 2014 Washington Auto Show at:

<https://www.washingtonautoshow.com/>

and steal a vehicle that is locked and without a key. The time needed to steal a car that is unlocked, unattended and running is literally a matter of seconds. And under DC law, motorists who leave a motor vehicle running and unattended can receive a \$50 ticket and the vehicle may be impounded. This cold-weather season, the MPD asks all motorists to take appropriate measures to avoid being the victim of auto theft and to never leave their vehicles running unattended.

» For more auto theft prevention and other safety tips, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

MPD AND DC COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SEEK CELL PHONE DONATIONS

Did you get a new smartphone or tablet for the holidays? Are you wondering what to do with your old one? If you have upgraded, please consider contributing your old cell phone to someone in need. The Victim Services Branch has collaborated with the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence for several years in collecting used cell phones for victims of domestic violence. Phones are collected by Victim Specialists and distributed to clients through our partner agencies, including: the Domestic Violence Intake Center at DC Superior Court and the Southeast Satellite Office at Greater Southeast Community Hospital.

Collection sites are in every police district and substation. Individuals may drop off their used and unwanted cell phones (and chargers/batteries, if you have them) in the designated boxes.

The DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence handles all tax deduction requests. Individuals requesting to receive a tax deduction for their contribution may either mail them directly to the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, drop them off at any police district, or contact the Victim Services Branch to schedule a time to drop off your phones with a Victim Specialist at the Metropolitan Police Department Headquarters location.

The cell phone donation program is a part of an effort to assist victims trying to leave an abusive relationship. During this crucial transition, the likelihood of a violent assault substantially increases and access to emergency services for victims can be critical. Victims can use a cell phone without an active service plan to call 911, which can provide the means for hope that help is a phone call away during a domestic violence assault. For you, it may just be clutter. For someone else, help is only a call away from a violent situation. Let's ensure they have a phone to make the call.

» For more information on the cell phone collection program, including a list of donation sites, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/donatecellphone>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now

part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service — positive or negative — through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline. Report crimes 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-843-5678 or reporting crimes online at [http://](http://www.cybertipline.com)

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Preventing terrorism is everybody's business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the MPD at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn how you can help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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