



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police Remind Drivers to Turn Off Unattended Vehicles

As the weather gets colder, the Howard County Police Department is reminding citizens not to leave unattended motor vehicles running with the keys in the ignition. The effort is aimed at educating the public of the risk they take by creating an “easy opportunity” for thieves to steal their vehicles.

Many vehicle thefts are considered “crimes of opportunity,” where the vehicle would not have been stolen if it had not been easy to do so. Vehicles that are left unlocked, with the ignition running or with keys inside the vehicle are at a high risk of being stolen. Of the 408 motor vehicles stolen in Howard County so far this year, 12 percent were either left running or had the keys inside the vehicle when they were taken.

Drivers should be aware that leaving a car unattended and running is a traffic violation subject to one point and a \$60 fine.

Citizens are encouraged to report all vehicle thefts and suspicious activity to the police. For more information on vehicle theft prevention, visit the Howard County Police Department’s Web site at www.hcpd.org.

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