

New Castle County Police Department



*Colonel E. M. Setting
Chief of Police*

NEWS RELEASE

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**New Castle County Division of Police Introduces
a New Public Safety Awareness Campaign**

"PARK SMART"

New Castle County Police is introducing a new initiative in the fight against the continual rise of vehicle break-ins as a result of automobiles being left unsecured.

Each year across the United States approximately \$1.255 billion in personal items and accessories are stolen from vehicles. More than half of the break-ins police investigate involve vehicles that were either unlocked or had no signs of forced entry. In addition, while parking lots may be targeted by some thieves, a closer look at the statistics show more than 60 percent of vehicle break-ins this year happened on residential streets, driveways or in County or State parklands.

Colonel E.M. Setting understands that property crime is as much of a problem for law enforcement agencies as it is for the public. With the implementation of the Chief's T.A.P.S. (Targeted Analytic Policing System) program, we have seen an overwhelming reduction in crime throughout the County as we have been focusing on "Quality of Life" crimes. The introduction of the "PARK SMART" campaign is now the first step in Colonel Setting's focus on attacking the property crime epidemic.

"I want our residents help in ensuring that they lock their car doors and in removing any valuable items from their vehicles so that these crimes of opportunity diminish," Colonel Setting said. The "PARK SMART" campaign will provide worthwhile material to our residents with the hope that they will become more involved and not be the next victim."

The New Castle County Police Department is launching this Public Safety Awareness Campaign to inform citizens about "PARK SMART". The goal of the campaign is to provide useful information to

our citizens on ways to reduce the likelihood of them becoming the victims of criminals breaking into their vehicles and stealing their possessions.

During the holiday season, police departments across the country see a spike in vehicle break-ins due to victims leaving more property in their vehicles as a result of holiday shopping. Becoming more educated and Parking Smartly will reduce the likelihood of you becoming one of those victims.

The New Castle County Police Department will be posting our “PARK SMART” signs in various locations throughout New Castle County, to include our County parklands and libraries. We will also be posting our “Smart Tips” on our website and our other social media sites.

The Park Smart campaign is simple:

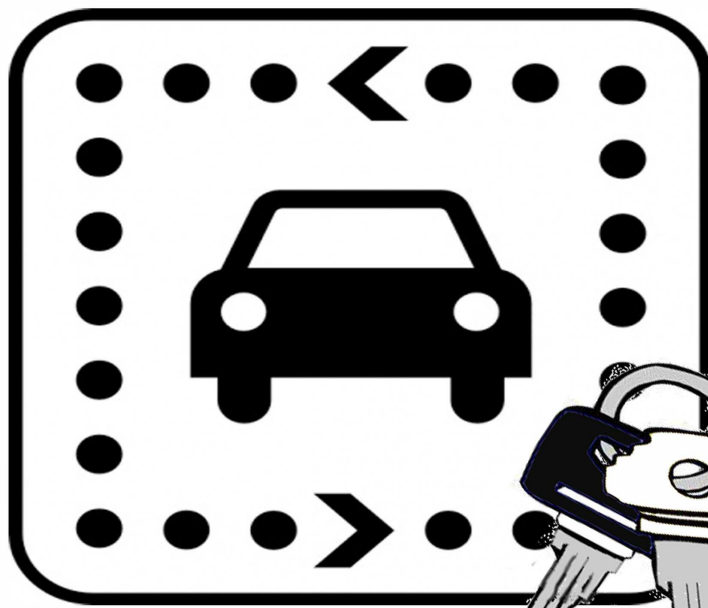
- ✓ Lock your vehicle***
- ✓ Secure your valuables***
- ✓ Take keys with you***

Below are some tips that we hope you will keep in mind every time you part your vehicle.

- *Never leave any type of bag or suitcase in the car. Thieves will smash a window just to see what is inside those items.*
- *Never attempt to hide anything by covering it with a blanket or coat. That’s an open invitation to thieves.*
- *Remove any attachments; cell phone or iPod chargers and cords are a dead giveaway that there is usually something of value inside the vehicle.*
- *ALWAYS lock your doors, even if you make a quick stop. Thieves are very quick at getting in and out of your car and they always have an eye out for people who are in a rush.*
- *Cash/coins, purses, iPods, Laptop computers, tools and cell phones are the most commonly stolen item, followed by GPS devices, CD’s and vehicle stereos.*
- *Park in an open, well-lit, and populated area near your destination, preferably one in view of a security camera.*
- *Avoid parking near strangers who are loitering or sitting in vehicles.*
- *If you have access to a garage, USE IT! By parking your vehicle on the street, in an alley or even on your driveway, the opportunity exists for you to become a victim. If you have no other choice, avoid dark and isolated areas.*
- *If your vehicle has a Remote Keyless Entry (RKE), you still need to ensure that all the doors are locked before leaving your vehicle, especially in public parking lots. There has been an increase in the use of jammers to prevent the RKE signal from activating the door locks.*
- *If your vehicle has an alarm system, always check your vehicle if you hear the alarm sound. Never try to stop a criminal who is attempting to gain entry into your vehicle. Be the best possible witness and get a good description of the person and call 9-1-1.*

- *Avoid parking near trucks, vans, dumpsters, and other objects that will obstruct visibility and provide hiding places.*

- LOCK YOUR VEHICLE
- SECURE YOUR VALUABLES
- TAKE KEYS WITH YOU



PARK SMART



REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY/PERSONS TO 9-1-1