

# Police Advisory

**Auto Theft: 4th Precinct**

**April 24, 2009**

## **Facts:**

The Fourth Precinct is experiencing an increase in tow truck related auto thefts. Vehicles are being stolen by conventional tow trucks, flat bed tow trucks, with auto dollies, and even tow ropes. Thieves are targeting vehicles 10 years old or older and selling them for scrap. Although many of these thefts are being reported throughout the 4th Precinct, this trend is also occurring city wide. Vehicles are being taken off of city streets and from driveways and parking lots. These thefts are occurring at various times throughout the day. Numerous tow trucks and other vehicles are suspected in these crimes, although no specific suspect vehicle descriptions are available at this time.

If your car is 10 years old or older, it is particularly vulnerable to this crime.

## **What you can do:**

- Park in your garage whenever possible.
- If you park in your driveway, park the car facing in, with the wheels turned all the way to the left or right. This will make it harder to tow.
- Try to park in well-lighted areas with plenty of natural surveillance. Avoid parking in secluded areas.
- Talk to your neighbors. Advise them to call 911 if they see anyone tampering with your car. Do the same for them.
- As a general rule, always lock your car when leaving it unattended. Never leave it unattended while it is running. Turn it off, lock it up, and take the keys—always.

## **Please call 911 if you see:**

- a tow truck circling the block, or that appears to be “casing” an area;
- a tow truck without a company name printed on it towing a vehicle;
- a tow truck towing a vehicle after normal business hours;
- a tow truck without license plates operating on the street; or
- anything that is suspicious or out of the ordinary.

When you call 911, give the operator a description of the tow truck, its license plate number (if any), and the license plate number of the vehicle being towed.

Please call 4th Precinct Property Crimes at 612-673-5714 if you have any information about these auto thefts. You can also call your crime prevention specialist for more auto theft prevention tips and information.

