

July 2024 – Preventing Vehicle Burglaries and Thefts

It's an unfortunate trend, but each year as the temperatures rise, so do the number of property crimes reported to the Naperville Police Department. One of the most common property crimes experienced in our area is burglary to motor vehicles. In most cases, this is a preventable crime. So, this month, the Naperville Police Department turns its Safer Naper education and prevention efforts towards protecting your vehicle and the property inside it.

Burglary to motor vehicle is the unlawful entry into a vehicle to commit a theft. In most cases, this is a crime of opportunity and occurs when thieves have easy access to your vehicle and the valuables left inside.

Need proof? In 2023, 78% of reported burglaries to motor vehicles occurred to UNLOCKED vehicles!

In 2023, there were 140 reported burglaries to motor vehicles in Naperville, 78% of which were to unlocked vehicles. In addition, 81 vehicles were reported stolen in Naperville in 2023. More than half (53%) of the stolen vehicles were believed to be unlocked, and the keys had been left in nearly a quarter of the stolen vehicles.

Preventing these crimes, in many cases, could have been as easy as pushing a button: Lock It or Lose It. Please do your part to prevent motor vehicle burglaries.

Burglary to Motor Vehicle Prevention Tips

DO ...

- ... lock your doors.
- ... close windows and sunroofs.
- ... park in well-lit areas.
- ... take your valuables with you or, if you intend on leaving them in your vehicle, place them out of sight before you get to your destination.
- ... unload your valuables immediately when you return home.

DON'T ...

- ... leave vehicles unattended with the doors unlocked or windows down.
- ... leave the keys in the vehicle, even in your garage or driveway.
- ... leave your purse, wallet, or cellphone in your vehicle.
- ... leave other valuables out in plain view.
- ... hide possessions under the seats; that's the first place burglars check for stored items.
- ... cover items left on the seat or floorboard of your car; blankets and clothing present a clue to thieves that items may be hidden underneath.
- ... leave any important documents that contain your personal information in your car.
- ... hide a spare key on your car; thieves know where to look.



Need a reminder to get you in the habit of securing your vehicle? Follow the 9PM Routine!

The 9PM Routine encourages residents to get into a nightly routine of making your residence and vehicle(s) tougher targets for crime by taking proactive steps to combat thefts and break-ins. It helps you develop your own personal security routines by having a designated time to perform these tasks every night. Set a reminder for 9 p.m. to go through the following checklist to make sure your property is secure:

- Remove any valuables from vehicles left outside overnight. Remember, NEVER leave your keys or garage door opener in your vehicle.
- Lock vehicle doors.
- Close the overhead garage door.
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows. Don't forget to lock the service door from your garage to your house.
- Turn on exterior lights and leave them on until dawn.



Remember: You only have to lock up the things you want to keep!

