



## **Automobile Theft Prevention Program**

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2016 Report to the State of Minnesota Governor and Legislature

Submitted by  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
Fraud Bureau

## **Program Mission**

The overall mission of the Auto Theft Prevention Program is to develop and sponsor the implementation of statewide plans, programs, and strategies to combat automobile theft, improve the administration of the automobile theft laws, and provide a forum for identification of critical problems for those persons dealing with automobile theft.

## **Program Background**

The Automobile Theft Prevention Program was created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1996.

The program is funded by a surcharge collected from automobile insurance carriers that provide comprehensive insurance coverage issued in the State of Minnesota. The amount of the surcharge collected for the Auto Theft Prevention Program is \$.50 per vehicle for every six months of coverage.

The program utilizes this funding for a competitive grant process for activities that address automobile theft in the State of Minnesota.

In July 2004, the Automobile Theft Prevention Program was statutorily transferred to the Minnesota Department of Commerce. The Department's Fraud Bureau has managed the program since 2009.

## **Extent of Automobile Theft in Minnesota\***

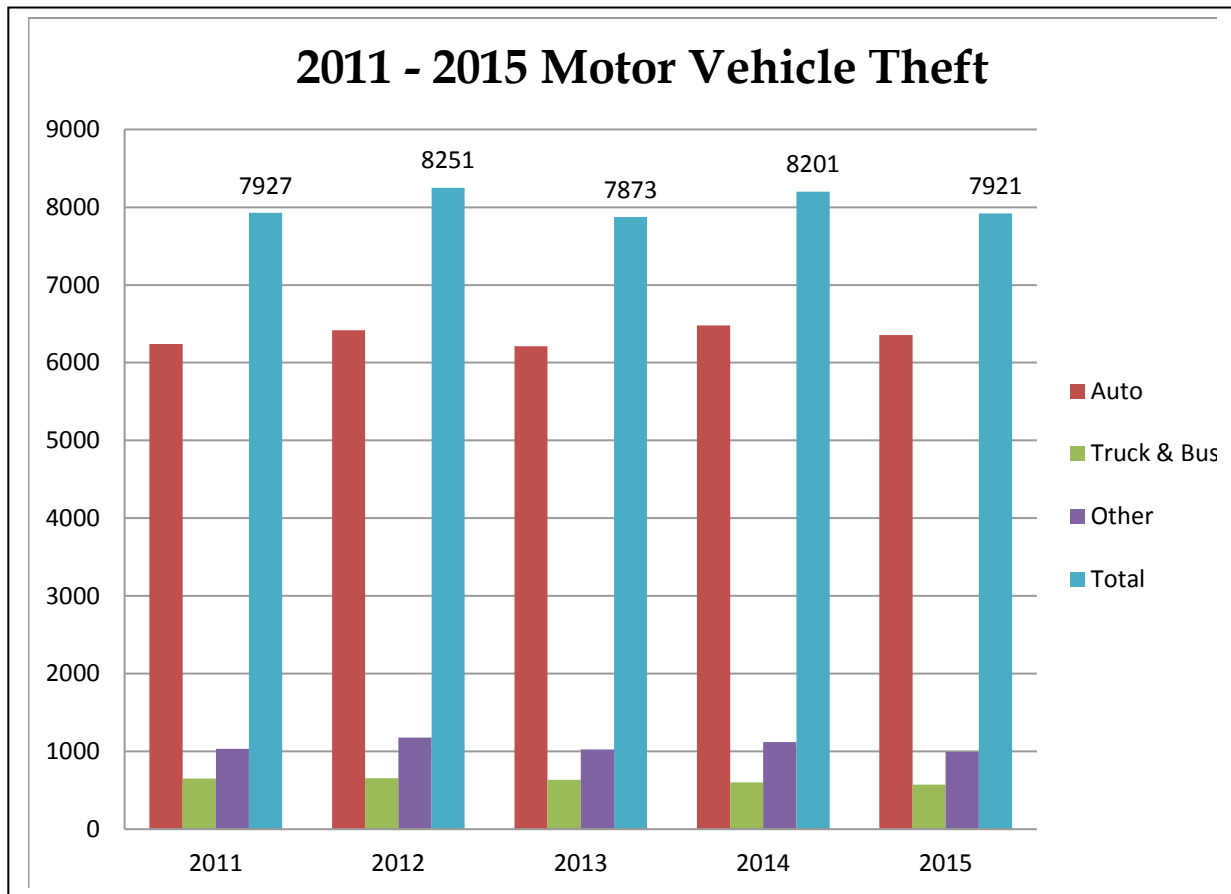
- In 2015, motor vehicle thefts represented 6.3% of the total property crimes reported in the state. On average, 22 vehicles per day were stolen in Minnesota during the calendar year 2015.
- In 2015, 8,261 vehicles were reported stolen in Minnesota, though 340 were later determined to be unfounded. The total confirmed number of stolen vehicles was 7,921.
  - 6,907 were stolen from metro counties, and 1,014 were stolen from non-metro counties.
- Of the total number of reported vehicle thefts, 1,614 were cleared, with 1,081 cleared with an arrest of a perpetrator. Of the total arrests, 232 involved the arrest of a juvenile.
- Of the 7,921 vehicles reported stolen in 2015, 6,354 were automobiles, 573 were trucks or buses, and 994 were other vehicles such as snowmobiles or motorcycles.
- Motor vehicle theft accounted for 6.5% of property crimes and 5.9% of all Part 1 offenses (serious crimes as defined by the FBI) in Minnesota for 2015.

- Motor vehicle theft was ranked the third costliest property crime in 2015, with a total of \$25,269,164 stolen (Larceny and Burglary led with \$54 and \$26 million, respectively).

\*Information from 2015 Minnesota Uniform Crime Report (BCA)

## Minnesota Vehicle Thefts 2011 – 2015

Based on the 2015 Uniform Crime Report published by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA), reports of motor vehicle thefts showed a small decrease (3.4%) from 2014 to 2015. As shown in the graph below, reported vehicle thefts have fluctuated slightly from year to year, but have remained relatively unchanged between 2011 and 2015, with 2013 being the lowest in five years.



Beginning in June 2016, the department began tracking additional data from the law enforcement agencies receiving grant funds. This was done in order better determine which programs, tools and strategies are the most effective.

Because the grant follows the state’s fiscal year, and this report is based on the calendar year, the information below represents data from October 2015 (beginning of quarter 2 of fiscal year 2016) through September 2016 (end of quarter 1 of fiscal year 2017), as the reports for quarter 2 of fiscal year 2017 are not due until the end of January.

**Law Enforcement**

Total Vehicles Stolen	5802
Total Stolen Vehicles Recovered	4064
With Damage	1156
Without Damage	2866
Unknown	42
Vehicles Processed As Evidence	416
Investigations Initiated	3943
Arrests	963
Adults	761
Juveniles	202
Non-Theft Arrests*	302
Bait Vehicle Deployment (in days)	1079
Activations	124
Stolen	41
Arrests	44

\*LPRs often capture drivers with warrants or license violations

**Prosecutors**

Cases Referred for Prosecution	1413
Cases Involving Auto Theft Only - Adult	410
Cases Involving Auto Theft Only - Juvenile	525
Auto Theft with Related Charges - Adult	141
Auto Theft with Related Charges - Juvenile	46
Cases Charged	880
Convictions	531
Prison Sentences (greater than one year)	180
Jail Sentences (one year or less)	219
Alternative Sentences	132

## **Auto Theft Prevention Program**

The following types of projects are eligible to receive funding through the Auto Theft Prevention Program:

- Training (criminal justice, citizens, business, etc.).
- Public education (public meetings, literature, public service announcements, neighborhood and business watch promotions, etc.).
- Programs designed to improve or expand the resources of existing auto theft prevention, investigation, apprehension, or prosecution activities.
- Multi-Jurisdictional projects combining the resources of various agencies in the task force approach to combat auto theft.
- Long-term specialized training to further the expertise of auto theft investigators or prosecutors.
- Piloting new equipment and techniques proposed by grant recipients.

## **Auto Theft Prevention Initiatives Funded in 2016-2017**

As part of the competitive grant process, the Auto Theft Prevention Program solicits applications from county attorney offices, law enforcement agencies, neighborhood and community organizations, and business organizations.

Priority in the competitive grant process is given to project proposals that included one or more of the following criteria:

- 1) established or enhanced a collaborative effort between two or more agencies;
- 2) included counties or regions with the greatest rates of automobile theft;
- 3) employed proven or promising strategies that reduced the incidence of automobile theft; and
- 4) addressed automobile theft that is perpetrated as part of a criminal enterprise.

During the state fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016), the Auto Theft Prevention Program provided grant funds totaling \$2,236,492.52 to 24 entities in Minnesota: 19 state or local law enforcement agencies (this includes several agencies working together as one entity); four county attorney offices; and 2 neighborhood, community, or business organizations.

During the state fiscal year 2017 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017), the Auto Theft Prevention Program provided grant funds totaling \$2,045,550.17 to 21 entities in Minnesota: 16 state or local law enforcement agencies (this includes several agencies working together as one entity); four county attorney offices; and two neighborhood, community, or business organizations.

Below are the agencies that received awards from the grant program in the fiscal biennium ending June 30, 2017.

<b>Grant Recipient</b>	<b>FY2017</b>
Anoka County Joint Law Enforcement Consortium	\$ 88,479.29
Anti-Vehicle Crime Association of Minnesota	\$ 24,550.00
Bemidji PD	\$ 86,040.23
Bloomington PD	\$ 35,498.00
Brooklyn Center PD	\$ 108,957.00
District 2 Community Council	\$ 27,845.00
Duluth PD	\$ 96,971.00
Hennepin County Attorney	\$ 323,340.00
Hennepin County Sheriff	\$ 36,000.00
Lakeville PD	\$ 820.00
Mille Lacs Co Sheriff	\$ 136,591.35
Minneapolis PD	\$ 176,741.00
Minnesota State Patrol	\$ 90,000.00
Ramsey Co Sheriff	\$ 74,320.00
Ramsey County Attorney	\$ 314,339.00
Richfield PD	\$ 18,982.00
Rochester PD	\$ 39,200.00
S. St. Paul/Inver Grove Heights/W. St. Paul PD	\$ 2,560.00
Saint Paul PD	\$ 282,316.30
Shakopee PD	\$ 7,200.00
Wash Co/Anoka Co Attorney	\$ 74,800.00

## **Auto Theft Prevention Program Impact**

The automobile theft rates for the five-year period 2011 through 2015 (most current data available) continue to show that the incidents of auto theft have stayed relatively level. While the numbers have not declined drastically, they are much lower than those reported in the 1990s and early 2000s, when stolen vehicles were more than double today's numbers (17,983 in 1996) and arrest rates were far lower.

While the factors involved in the overall decline of auto thefts are numerous, the concerted efforts of the organizations receiving funding from the Automobile Theft Prevention Program are undoubtedly a contributing factor, as they continually address the issue through investigations, arrest, prosecution, public outreach, and identifying new trends in vehicle theft is perpetrated.

The financial support provided by this grant program continues to be critical in sustaining prevention and enforcement efforts for many city and county agencies in areas where the incidence of auto theft are the highest. It is unlikely that agencies would be able to sustain their auto theft initiatives without the support received from the Auto Theft Prevention Program.

## **Program Highlight and Noteworthy Cases**

### **Minneapolis Car Theft with Children Inside**

A Princeton man was accused of stealing a car in Minneapolis with five children inside. The suspect who was just released from Hennepin County jail stole a vehicle with the children after he was unable to find a drug dealer in Minneapolis. The children reported they were assaulted when the older child sitting in the front seat struggled with the suspect to remove the key from the ignition. Shortly after the vehicle was stolen, the children were shoved out by the suspect and he fled the scene. The suspect was later apprehended in Rogers by a state trooper after a high-speed pursuit.

### **Washington County Training and Outreach**

The Washington County Attorney's office continues an effective multipronged approach to combating auto theft. The agency conducts periodic training sessions for local law enforcement personnel on how to effectively investigate auto theft. This training appears to have had effect in the county, as the case decline rate is very low.

The county also engages in community outreach through social media and utilizes school resource officers in messaging to students in the area high schools.



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