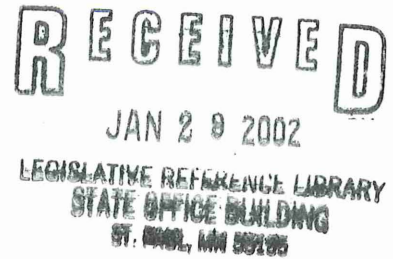


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AUTO THEFT PREVENTION PROGRAM
Minnesota Statutes 2001, Section 299A.75
January 1, 2002



How the Program Works

In 1996, the Minnesota Legislature created the Auto Theft Prevention Program. This program is funded from a surcharge that is collected from automobile insurance carriers that provide comprehensive insurance coverage issued in the State of Minnesota. The amount of the surcharge is 50 cents per vehicle for every six months of coverage. Utilizing this funding, the program makes money available through a competitive grant process for activities to address the problem of auto theft in the State of Minnesota.

Minnesota Statutes 2001, Section 299A.75, Subdivision 4 created the seven-member Automobile Theft Prevention Advisory Board to advise the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety on the distribution of grant funding for the program. This Board met in November 2001 to advise the Commissioner on allowable expenditures for the program and grant award amounts for 2002.

Mission

To reduce motor vehicle theft and its consequences in the State of Minnesota by funding programs which aid in the:

- Identification of Critical Issues
- Education and Awareness
- Investigation and Prosecution

Extent of Auto Theft in Minnesota

In 2000, there were 13,529 motor vehicles stolen in Minnesota with a value of \$58,018,277. This figure represents eight percent of property crimes in Minnesota and indicates a theft rate of 283 per 100,000 residents.

The top ten stolen automobiles in Minnesota are:

1. Toyota Camry
2. Oldsmobile Cutlass/Supreme/Ciera
3. Honda Civic
4. Honda Accord
5. Chevrolet Compact SUV (Blazer)
6. Buick LeSabre
7. Ford Taurus
8. Oldsmobile Delta 88/Royale
9. Chevrolet Full Size C/K Pick-up
10. Jeep Cherokee/Grand Cherokee

Minn. Stat. 299A.75 Subd. 2

2000 Minn. Laws Chap. 488
Art. 6 Sec. 7

How the Money is Utilized

Each two years, the Department of Public Safety solicits auto theft grant applications from county attorney's offices, law enforcement agencies, and neighborhood, community, and business organizations. A seven-member Automobile Theft Prevention Advisory Board advises the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety on the distribution of grant funding for the program. Applications may be submitted for the following types of projects:

1. Training (criminal justice, citizen and business, etc.)
2. Public Education (public meetings, literature, public service announcements, neighborhood and business watch promotions, etc.)
3. Programs designed to improve or expand the resources of existing auto theft prevention, investigation, apprehension, or prosecution activities.
4. Multi-jurisdictional projects combining the resources of different agencies in the task force approach to combat auto theft.
5. Long term specialized training to further the expertise of auto theft investigators or prosecutors.

In 2001, twenty-nine grantees were operating auto theft prevention programming in cities and counties throughout Minnesota including:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Beltrami County | 13. City of Brooklyn Park |
| 2. Dakota County | 14. City of Burnsville |
| 3. Hennepin County (2) | 15. City of Duluth |
| 4. Mahnommen County | 16. City of Inver Grove Heights |
| 5. Ramsey County | 17. City of Minneapolis (2) |
| 6. Anoka County | 18. City of Owatonna |
| 7. Rice County | 19. City of Roseville |
| 8. Anti-Vehicle Crime Assoc. (2) | 20. City of Shakopee |
| 9. City of Cass Lake | 21. City of South St. Paul |
| 10. City of Eden Prairie | 22. City of St. Paul (3) |
| 11. City of Eagan | 23. City of St. Louis Park |
| 12. City of Bloomington | 24. City of Plymouth |

AUTO THEFT PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM
PROJECT SUMMARIES: JULY 2000 – DECEMBER 2001

Anoka County Sheriff's Office \$101,070

Supported activities of the Anoka County Auto Theft Task Force by:

- Continuing inspections of used car dealerships and swap meets, attention to repeat offenders, and release of statistics to local media to raise awareness of auto theft.
- Training investigators and peace officers in auto theft related investigations and expanding the amount of training available by providing for tuition and registration costs.
- Supplying personnel and equipment to maintain centralized database and coordinate efforts throughout the county.
- Continuing salvage yard inspections (four per year), in-depth investigations, undercover operations, intelligence gathering, use of informants, and decoy vehicle operations in the three highest offense areas.
- Purchasing mapping software to expand the capacity of the centralized database.

Anti-Vehicle Crime Association of Minnesota (AVCAM – media) \$307,500

Created and implemented a media/education campaign to:

- Increase public understanding of preventing automobile theft by producing radio and television announcements, billboards, and newspaper ads in both metro and out-state markets targeting the areas of highest auto theft rates.
- Increase public recognition of the social and economic costs of motor vehicle theft.
- Work with law enforcement officials and other subject matter experts to design and produce auto theft prevention training videos for law enforcement agencies.
- Work with local law enforcement to determine high-risk locations for targeted media campaign.
- Incorporate the Minnesota Help Eliminate Auto Theft (H.E.A.T.) reward line in appropriate media campaign to encourage the public to report information about auto theft.

Anti-Vehicle Crime Association of Minnesota (AVCAM-training) \$8,970

AVCAM utilized grant funding to:

- Hold two vehicle theft investigation seminars (September 2000 and May 2001) to train 100 law enforcement officers with vehicle theft techniques, Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) training, investigative resources, and training in the laws and statutes pertaining to vehicle theft.
- Provide training through two AVCAM training seminars (Fall 2000 and Spring 2001) offered to law enforcement officers, insurance company claims personnel, and other actively involved in combating vehicle theft.

- Produce and distribute a vehicle theft investigation manual to assist investigators in conducting vehicle investigations.

Beltrami County Sheriff's Office \$104,280

Continued the efforts of the on-going auto theft program by:

- Formulating two media campaigns (spring and winter) each year to encourage the public to use a "common sense" approach to auto theft prevention by locking car doors, pocketing keys, etc.
- Providing additional training for the full-time auto theft investigator.
- Working closely with township boards, community crime watch groups, the Bemidji Police Department, the Blackduck Police Department, the Leech Lake Indian Reservation Security, and the Red Lake Indian Reservation Police Department.
- Educating the public about the theft of cars, trucks, ATVs, and snowmobiles through informative speeches and presentations.
- Utilizing the Map View software to produce geo-coded maps of where thefts are occurring and utilize a bait car in those areas.
- Monitoring and building relationships with area salvage yards and car dealers to aid in the detection of disguised stolen vehicles.
- Continuing to cultivate and utilize informants and to distribute information on stolen vehicles ("hot list") to officers and deputies working on the street.

Bloomington Police Department \$79,500

Furthered the efforts of the continuing auto theft prevention program by:

- Working with the Minneapolis Police Department for increased activity at a joint undercover storefront location.
- Leasing, maintaining, and insuring two bait vehicles.
- Training and equipping several officers to more adequately process every recovered stolen vehicle.
- Purchasing a hand-held bar code reader to identify altered or partially destroyed Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN), a second GPS covert tracking system, and a camera for processing recovered stolen vehicles.
- Allowing two officers to attend the Annual International Association of Auto Theft Investigators (IAATI) Conference.

Brooklyn Park Police Department \$44,565

Developed and implemented an auto theft prevention and reduction program that would combine training, targeted surveillance/enforcement, use of decoy vehicles, and public education and awareness by:

- Identifying repeat offenders and utilizing undercover surveillance to monitor their activities.
- Utilizing undercover surveillance in high-risk areas.
- Obtaining decoy vehicles to assist in apprehending offenders.

- Utilizing crime mapping software and/or police reports to identify trends, methods, high-risk areas, and to determine the effectiveness of current efforts.
- Processing all recovered stolen vehicles for physical evidence to assist in the identification and prosecution of suspects.
- Providing auto theft presentations and prevention literature to high-risk areas including auto dealerships and apartment complexes.
- Developing an advertising campaign to increase public awareness using both print and television media.
- Providing prevention information to Crime Watches throughout the city.
- Working with organizations such as AVCAM and IAATI to provide ongoing updates and training to officers and investigators.
- Providing training to officers on recognizing stolen vehicles, working with decoy vehicles, and prevention techniques.

Burnsville Police Department \$59,887.50

Continued the efforts of the on-going auto theft prevention program by:

- Developing partnerships with other communities to facilitate the sharing of information and trends by holding two training events with neighboring agencies and businesses
- Training police officers, criminal intelligence analysts, community prosecutors, and auto dealership personnel in ways to prevent and track auto theft.
- Allowing two officers to attend the IAATI Conference and three officers to attend an auto theft prevention conference in Vancouver.
- Providing educational materials to police officers on stolen auto recovery and processing.
- Continuing to lease and maintain a decoy vehicle and purchasing equipment such as a Indenta-Print Inkless Fingerprint system, heat sealer for preserving evidence, forensic optical comparator, forensic illuminating light source, master number restoration kit, and auto theft processing supplies.
- Utilizing a decoy vehicle, investigators, and a criminal intelligence analyst to actively work auto theft cases.

Cass Lake Police Department \$70,666.50

Furthered the efforts of the continuing auto theft prevention program by:

- Sending two police department representatives to attend a certified auto theft prevention school and public awareness training program and training all new officers in decoy operations tracking and the use of surveillance equipment.
- Holding public awareness meetings, mailing surveys and brochures, and conducting a public service campaign using radio media.
- Conducting two in-house motor vehicle theft and public awareness training workshops for seven additional officers.

- Re-assigning an officer (0.2 full-time equivalent) and giving overtime hours to other officers to continue the decoy operations, follow-up investigations, and identifying high risk areas and suspects.
- Identifying three of the highest incidence offense areas and implementing location specific strategies to reduce motor vehicle theft including decoy operations and surveillance.

Dakota County Attorney's Office \$150,546.60

Continued the efforts of the on-going auto theft prevention program by:

- Aggressively prosecuting auto theft cases.
- Partnering with four other counties in the multijurisdictional South Metro County Attorney's Auto Theft Task Force and funding one full-time prosecutor and one full-time legal secretary for work on auto theft cases.
- Tracking cases to ensure that standards on timeliness of charging cases are met and that all cases that meet legal sufficiency requirements are charged.
- Developing methods of increasing public awareness and promoting education on preventing auto theft.
- Working with Community Corrections to ensure that the full amount of restitution is ordered for victims and collected in a timely manner.
- Advocating for guideline sentencing on all cases.
- Developing and presenting training for police officers based on survey results showing training needs.
- Holding first-time offenders accountable by charging with felony offense and seeking a combination of local incarceration and sentencing alternatives.
- Distributing informational pamphlets to local libraries, governmental offices, community coalitions, neighborhood watch groups, and public speaking engagements and developing a quarterly newsletter for law enforcement agencies, insurance investigators, etc.

Duluth Police Department \$131,059.50

Strengthened the Department's auto theft prevention program by:

- Continuing to work with Proctor, MN and Superior, WI in the Greater Duluth project area providing investigative support for auto theft cases that cross state lines.
- Gathering detailed information related to crime data, suspects, and auto body and scrap dealers and maintaining a distribution network for information.
- Continuing to lease one surveillance vehicle and purchasing new equipment, including a 35mm camera and a Vehicle Identification Number bar code scanner, to meet intelligence and enforcement needs.
- Utilizing the public access television program "Crime Stoppers" and other public address methods for distribution of information 1-3 times per month.
- Conducting public education events and attending community group and block watch meetings to increase awareness of how to prevent auto thefts; enlisting community support for the apprehension of auto thieves.

Eagan Police Department \$66,151.50

Continued the efforts of the on-going auto theft prevention program by:

- Working with the county attorney's office to prosecute auto theft suspects.
- Utilizing a leased motor vehicle equipped with audio, video, and tracking capabilities as a decoy vehicle in high theft areas to apprehend thieves.
- Developing and distributing 20,000 educational brochures to Eagan businesses and multi-housing developments.
- Funding overtime activities and training for police officers to prevent motor vehicle theft and recover stolen motor vehicles.
- Collecting data on auto thefts, auto recoveries, suspect arrests, and convictions.

Eden Prairie Police Department \$45,000

Furthered the efforts of the continuing auto theft prevention program by:

- Increasing patrol activities of already identified high-risk areas from 10 to 16 hours per week.
- Collecting and analyzing data to re-evaluate risk areas.
- Educating the public in the prevention of auto thefts by distributing informational posters and conducting presentations to community groups.
- Paying overtime for proactive enforcement efforts and using a decoy vehicle in high-risk areas to increase the number of arrests and prosecutions of suspects.
- Allowing two officers to attend the IAATI training seminar.
- Working cooperatively with other agencies in the investigation and prosecution of auto thefts.

Hennepin County Attorney \$374,229

Continued the efforts of the specialized auto theft prosecution unit by:

- Increasing restitution for victims.
- Renewing the employment of two grant-funded attorneys to review all adult motor vehicle theft referrals and one grant-funded attorney with specialized training to handle all juvenile motor vehicle theft referrals.
- Aggressively and consistently charging adults and juveniles in motor vehicle theft cases.
- Requesting increased and more consistent sanctions for offenders.
- Decreasing case-processing time for auto theft cases.
- Increasing collaboration with Hennepin County law enforcement by being available for consultation with investigators, participating in meeting with the Minneapolis Police Department, and attending law enforcement seminars.
- Collaborating with other stakeholders including judges and probation representatives to improve case handling, disposition options, and case-related communication.

- Increasing the emphasis on crime analysis including case tracking and evaluation including prior criminal history indicators, more detailed disposition data, and program outcome data.

Hennepin County Sheriff's Office \$98,846.99

Strengthened the current auto theft prevention program by:

- Adding a second decoy vehicle to the program equipped with surveillance equipment and a GPS device.
- Allowing the five officers in the auto theft program to attend the 2001 IAATI conference for training purposes.
- Providing for overtime time for five officers to allow them to continue their Harley Davidson motorcycle and auto theft prevention activities.

Inver Grove Heights Police Department \$25,500

Supported the efforts of the Motor Vehicle Theft Task Force by:

- Continuing the task force surveillance operation with two officers working once a week during the prime midnight to 6 am hours.
- Adding new equipment to be used for surveillance of identified high-risk areas.
- Meeting with neighborhood groups and businesses (including car dealerships) to discuss strategies to reduce the number of automobile thefts and related crimes.
- Sharing information with other neighboring communities for a more collaborative and proactive approach to auto theft prevention.
- Reviewing automobile theft reports to analyze and determine patterns of current thefts including trends, methods, times of day, and locations.

Mahnomen County Sheriff's Department \$20,250

Continued the efforts of the on-going auto theft prevention program by:

- Using patrol officers to target Naytahwaush, the area with the highest number of auto thefts in the county, for quick response to thefts and recovery of stolen vehicles.
- Conducting a public service campaign using the local media.
- Distributing 2,000 anti-theft handouts to the public at community gatherings, neighborhood watch groups, and the county fair.
- Utilizing a decoy vehicle equipped for videotape surveillance.

Minneapolis Police Department \$300,750

Continued the efforts of the city-wide Task Force by:

- Collaborating with the Minnesota State Patrol and the Bloomington Police Department to conduct a storefront sting operation for the purchase of stolen vehicles, auto parts, and equipment, targeting organized auto theft rings and chop shops.
- Utilizing decoy vehicles with GPS systems in high-risk theft areas throughout the city to apprehend auto thieves and to investigate organized auto theft rings, Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN) switching operations, and chop shops.

- Continuing proactive motor vehicle theft approaches such as targeting well-known auto thieves, working on legislation for changes to salvage yard law, and undercover activities.
- Leasing decoy vehicles for use in every precinct in Minneapolis.
- Compiling data for on-going crime analysis of auto theft reports and historical profiles of suspected chop shops and organized auto theft rings throughout the City of Minneapolis.
- Establishing a short-term Auto Theft Information hotline for the public.
- Continuing public service announcements on the “bait vehicle” program and available vehicle anti-theft devices through the media and press releases.

Minneapolis Police Department (media) \$27,000

Continued the efforts of the citywide Task Force by:

- Utilizing billboards, newspaper ads, and shelter signs at Metro Transit Council bus stations to advertise the Bait Vehicle Program for the deterrence of auto theft.
- Renewing public awareness programs and public service announcements for the auto theft program and vehicle auto-theft devices (including On Guard, the Club, and car alarms) through the media and press releases.

Owatonna Police Department \$236,552

Supported the efforts of the continuing auto theft prevention program by:

- Working with local cable and radio stations to create public service announcements.
- Purchasing and installing GPS tracking systems in two decoy vehicles.
- Funding overtime for officers involved in surveillance activities.
- Hosting informational forums and school presentations to teach the public how to prevent auto theft and how to report these crimes to the police should they occur.
- Training officers to better prevent auto thefts and to recover stolen vehicles.

Plymouth Police Department \$44,253

Continued the efforts of the Plymouth Auto Theft Prevention Program by:

- Educating the public about auto theft prevention techniques through local newspapers, community television, flyers, Crime Watch captains, and the multi-housing officer.
- Leasing and maintaining one decoy vehicle for use in high-risk areas.
- Completing a criminal analysis of stolen and recovered vehicles to identify potential suspects.
- Funding the wages of one part-time grant administrator (10 hours per week) and officers participating in decoy operations (8 hours per week)
- Training local patrol officers, investigators, and apartment and hotel manager in the identification of stolen vehicles.
- Increasing the number of Watch Your Car registrants.

Ramsey County Attorney \$222,468

Supported the efforts of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office Automobile Theft Program by:

- Communicating with other law enforcement agencies (including the St. Paul Police Department and suburban Ramsey County police agencies) and prosecutors in other counties (including the Hennepin County Attorney's Office and the Southeast Metropolitan program) to enhance decision-making and increase collaborative activities.
- Renewing funding for one prosecuting attorney and upgrading the part-time law clerk position to a second attorney position. One attorney would be primarily responsible for adult prosecution while the other would focus on juvenile prosecution.
- Continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of the program by gathering and analyzing data about the disposition of cases.
- Enhancing the training of prosecuting attorneys by attending educational seminars and by participating with the Minnesota State Patrol and the St. Paul Police Department in the field examining methods of concealing vehicle identity.
- Researching the criminal history of all offenders to enable the courts to impose the correct sanction.
- Providing training for law enforcement personnel on investigating and preparing cases for prosecution and for the public on auto theft prevention.
- Ensuring the best possible prosecution of both juvenile and adult auto theft cases by allowing the same prosecutor to handle the case from charging to sentencing and by establishing tough prosecution policies.

Rice County \$27,450

Furthered the efforts of the on-going auto theft prevention program by:

- Identifying high-risk areas and repeat offenders throughout Rice County communities and setting up neighborhood watch groups in those areas.
- Collaborating with Faribault, Northfield, Dundas, Nerstrand, Lonsdale, Webster, Vesili, Morristown, and Warsaw involving law enforcement, prosecutors, businesses, and community groups.
- Increasing efforts in decoy operations, chop shop identification, and profiling suspects of auto thefts through officer overtime.
- Developing a working reward tip line for the public to assist in the apprehension of offenders.
- Increasing public awareness and education by giving seminars to civic groups and schools and by setting up a booth at a shopping mall.
- Leasing a decoy vehicle with GPS tracking system to use in high incident areas.

Roseville Police Department \$18,750

Continued the efforts of the current auto theft prevention program by:

- Purchasing a portable informational kiosk for use at National Night Out functions, Family Night Out gatherings, citizen and youth academy meetings, city open house

functions, Explorer functions, schools, shopping centers, businesses, and the city's driver and vehicle registration center.

- Offering scheduled overtime to officers for increased auto theft surveillance.
- Designing and printing an educational brochure for officers to hand out at the kiosk informing the public about auto theft prevention measures and programs offered through the police department.
- Training one officer to act as a community liaison auto theft prevention coordinator available to talk to and train local community groups, businesses, and concerned citizens about auto theft prevention.
- Continuing the "Watch Your Car" program. Vehicle owners sign an agreement allowing the police to stop their car between 1 and 5 am to verify ownership.

St. Louis Park Police Department \$45,900

Continued the efforts of the St. Louis Park Auto Theft Prevention Program by:

- Distributing informational flyers to the public and foster partnerships with Neighborhood Block Captains and other leaders as a prevention mechanism.
- Refining the current data collection process to produce more accurate statistical data on suspects and crime locations and to identify victim profiles and commonalties between 1998 and 1999 auto theft incidents.
- Creating a mapping program for mobile computing devices to enable officers to have current information while out of the office.
- Utilizing decoy vehicles in targeted neighborhoods/locations.

St. Paul Police Department \$39,396.48

Strengthened the efforts of Auto Theft Unit program by:

- Funding overtime for officers working on short term and long term investigations and surveillance of auto theft rings and chop shops.
- Utilizing decoy vehicles obtained from the police impound lot in areas cars are most likely to be stolen by auto theft rings.
- Training current and new St. Paul officers on techniques of auto theft detection and pro-active methods they can use when working on cases involving career auto thieves and chop shop operators.
- Coordinating with the Special Investigations Unit and the Juvenile Unit to ensure that investigation data is available, shared, and useful to all three groups working on auto and motorcycle theft in St. Paul.
- Educating the public and car dealerships on methods to safeguard vehicles and prevent auto thefts.

St. Paul Police Department (motorcycles) \$27,750

Continued the efforts of the on-going Harley Davidson theft prevention program by:

- Assisting other agencies with motorcycle theft programs to reduce incidence of theft.
- Allowing officers to work overtime hours to conduct surveillance, analyze data, and use a decoy motorcycle as a long-term investigative strategy.

- Funding payments to informants for the apprehension of motorcycle theft suspects.
- Leasing a Harley Davidson decoy motorcycle for “bait-bike” operations.

St. Paul Police Department (juvenile) \$34,387.20

Furthered the efforts of the on-going St. Paul Police Department Juvenile Unit auto theft prevention program by:

- Using updated statistics to analyze locations and suspects and coordinate with the Auto Theft and Special Investigations Units to identify trends in auto theft.
- Changing internal policy to have all juvenile suspects in stolen vehicle cases processed through the booking unit to keep accurate records of individuals involved in auto thefts and to deter those juveniles from future involvement based on the likelihood of their identification in the future.
- Mailing letters (in several languages) to parents of juvenile offenders involved in auto theft cases informing them of their child’s actions, what the possible consequences are, and suggestions to prevent future involvement in auto theft crimes.
- Utilizing grant money for direct proactive auto theft investigation and surveillance techniques to target juvenile offenders using both Sergeants and street officers with juvenile experience.
- Developing an educational and training video for current and new officers to help them detect auto thefts and catch juvenile offenders.
- Performing the background work necessary to determine whether a juvenile is a gang member and whether any charges can be “enhanced” under the statute applying to gangs.
- Developing and distributing a flyer for school systems to educate and deter juveniles from getting involved in auto thefts.

Shakopee Police Department \$16,500

Continued the efforts of the current auto theft prevention program by:

- Partnering with Scott County to create a multi-jurisdictional auto theft prevention program.
- Increasing the amount of arrests and prosecutions through officer training in investigative techniques.
- Utilizing a decoy vehicle equipped with a GPS tracking system in residential and commercial areas as a proactive measure.
- Educating the public by distributing prevention literature at community events.
- Compiling and evaluating arrest data in a database to share with other jurisdictions.

South St. Paul Police Department \$15,000

Strengthened the efforts of the current auto theft prevention program by:

- Placing high visibility concentrated marked squad and bicycle patrol in selected areas for auto theft prevention.
- Utilizing a computer system to analyze and determine patterns of automobile thefts and related crimes (location, time of day, method, and vehicle type).
- Conducting covert surveillance with equipment purchased from prior years' grants.
- Changing decoy vehicle from a sport utility vehicle to a sports car to more accurately reflect auto theft trends.