

STATE OF ARIZONA
ARIZONA AUTOMOBILE
THEFT AUTHORITY
WWW.AZWATCHYOURCAR.COM



NEWS RELEASE
For More Information
Contact: Ann Armstrong
Arizona Automobile
Theft Authority
Phone: 602 364-2892
ann.armstrong@aata.az.gov

For Immediate Release
April 22, 2008

ARIZONA AUTO THEFT AUTHORITY & THE NATIONAL INSURANCE CRIME BUREAU (NICB) REPORT CONTINUED DOWNWARD TREND FOR VEHICLE THEFTS

PHOENIX - The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) released their 2008 Hot Spots and Hot Wheels Report today, which shows the Phoenix MSA (metropolitan statistical area) dropped from the 4th spot down to the 8th spot on the list, with a reduction of nearly 16% in the vehicle theft rate for 2007.

For 2007, the ten MSAs with the highest vehicle theft rates are:

<u>2007 Ranking</u>		<u>2006 Ranking</u>
1	Modesto, CA	5
2	Las Vegas/Paradise, NV	1
3	San Diego/Carlsbad/San Marcos, CA	11
4	Stockton, CA	2
5	San Francisco/Oakland/Fremont, CA	12
6	Laredo, TX	22
7	Albuquerque, NM	13
8	Phoenix/Mesa/Scottsdale, AZ	4
9	Yakima, WA	9
10	Tucson, AZ	10

The rate is determined by the number of vehicle theft offenses per 100,000 inhabitants using the 2007 U.S. Census Population Estimates, the most current figures available.

According to NICB, the preliminary 2007 crime data released by the FBI in January contains some positive news on the vehicle theft front. Not only is 2007 on track to be the fourth consecutive year of declining vehicle thefts, but if the preliminary figure of -7.4% holds, it will be the largest single year percent drop in thefts since 1999 and it will contribute to the overall 11% reduction in vehicle thefts, nationally, since 2000.

-more-

“Although Arizona continues to move down the list, we need vehicle owners, law enforcement and the criminal justice community to continue their diligence in fighting this insidious crime,” stated Enrique Director, AATA Executive Director.

NICB cites the use of bait cars, license plate readers and owner-applied theft deterrence and recovery systems as delivering outstanding results. In the coming years, technological advances may well defeat vehicle theft as a major crime problem in the United States.

The AATA encourages Arizona residents can take extra precautions to secure their vehicles through a “layered approach” to protection. The more layers on your vehicle, the tougher it is to steal.

Layer #1 -- Common Sense

- Lock your car & always take the keys with you
- Park in well-lit areas
- Never leave your vehicle running and unattended
- Do not leave valuables in plain view - lock merchandise in the trunk. If you do not have a trunk, keep packages covered and out of sight.
- Do not hide a spare set of keys in the car - the pros know where to look
- If you have a garage, use it

Layer #2 -- Visible & Audible Warning Devices

The second layer of protection is any device that can be SEEN or HEARD and alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Some popular examples include:

- Audible alarms, steering wheel locks, brake locks
- The AATA’s FREE Watch Your Car Program
- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) etching on vehicle windows – visit the AATA’s website (www.azwatchyourcar.com – Events page) for a list of free events in the community.

Layer #3 -- Immobilizing Devices

This third layer of protection is a device which prevents thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle. Some popular devices include:

- Kill switches
- Starter, ignition and fuel disablers
- Smart keys
- High security locks & keys
- Fuse cut-offs

Layer #4 -- Tracking Devices

The final layer of protection is a tracking device which emits a signal to a police or monitoring station when the vehicle is reported stolen. Tracking devices are very effective in helping authorities recover stolen vehicles.

For additional information about the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority and the Watch Your Car Program, call 1-888-668-4433 or visit the website at www.azwatchyourcar.com. For complete information on the *Hot Spots 2008*, please visit www.nicb.org.

###