

STATE OF ARIZONA
ARIZONA AUTOMOBILE
THEFT AUTHORITY
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NEWS RELEASE
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POLICE BAIT CARS NAB AUTO THIEVES - ARIZONA AUTO THEFT AUTHORITY ANNOUNCES TWO SEPARATE BAIT CAR ARRESTS IN THE PAST WEEK

PHOENIX – The AZ. Auto Theft Authority (AATA), is pleased to report two suspects have been arrested in the past week in separate **POLICE BAIT CARS** here in the Valley.

Mesa Police and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office both nabbed thieves in their bait cars last week. Last Monday, Mesa PD nabbed a 43-year old female and on Thursday evening, MCSO arrested a 30-year old male. Both suspects were taken into custody and booked into the 4th Avenue Jail for Theft of Means of Transportation.

Utilizing police bait cars is part of an ongoing effort by Arizona law enforcement agencies to fight auto theft and vehicle break-ins in our state. Last year, Arizona achieved another year of declining auto theft rates with a 17% decrease from the previous year and the eighth (8th) consecutive year for a statewide drop. Overall, Arizona ranked sixth (6th) in the nation for vehicle thefts per capita and eighth (8th) for total stolen vehicles.

In addition, the Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma MSA's (metropolitan statistical areas) made a significant drop down the Top U.S. Cities list last year; Phoenix dropped to 56th place, Tucson to 22nd and Yuma to 88th place. This marks a significant improvement for these cities, particularly Phoenix, once labeled the car theft capital of the U.S. In 2001, Phoenix and Tucson both held the #1 and #2 spots respectively on the list and remained on the top ten until 2008.

Arizona's Bait Car program began as a pilot project in 2003 by a handful of Valley law enforcement agencies then soon expanded across the state using grant funds from the Arizona Auto Theft Authority (AATA) with vehicles donated by the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) and its member companies. Auto thefts in Arizona have decreased 62% since the bait cars were introduced.

For more information, visit www.azwatchyourcar.com

For Mesa PD bait car video, please contact Sgt. Jodie Martinez - 480 644-4712 - email: Jodie.Martinez@mesaaz.gov
For MCSO bait car video, please contact Sgt. Brandon Luth - 602 876-3857 – email: b_luth@mcs.maricopa.gov

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