

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



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **ARIZONA PUTS THE BRAKES ON AUTO THEFTS FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT YEAR**

**PHOENIX** – The Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA) is pleased to announce that Arizona’s vehicle theft rate dropped by 25% in 2008. According to statistics released from the FBI’s 2008 Uniform Crime Report (UCR), our state realized its largest double digit decrease in nearly a decade.

The FBI’s Report also shows vehicle thefts across the United States decreased by 12.7% from 2007; the fifth consecutive year of declining vehicle thefts nationwide. Moreover, the total thefts for 2008 are below 1 million vehicles—the lowest annual total in over 20 years.

This is great news for vehicle owners, law enforcement and the insurance industry,” said Brian R. Salata, AATA Executive Director. “It takes years of sustained effort to deliver the kind of reductions that we are enjoying today.” The AATA exists to establish, coordinate and fund activities to prevent, combat and reduce vehicle theft in Arizona. By focusing resources in enforcement/investigative units, prosecution efforts, and aggressive public education programs, the AATA believes it has largely been the driving force behind decreasing auto theft in Arizona.

Although this downward trend is encouraging, Arizona still had more than 37,000 vehicles stolen last year and the problem remains a costly drain on our economy (over \$282 million in 2008) and a tremendous hassle for victims.

The AATA encourages all Arizona residents to 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

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- Do not leave valuables in plain view or make sure to lock items in the trunk or keep covered and out of sight.
- Do not hide a spare set of keys in the car
- If you have a garage, Use it.
- Research vehicle's VIN number and vehicle history using services like the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System – [www.vehiclehistory.gov](http://www.vehiclehistory.gov)

### **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](http://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](http://www.azwatchyourcar.com).

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