



Hot Wheels: Press Release

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Contact: Frank Scafidi 800.447.6282 ext.
4441fscafidi@nicb.org

HOT WHEELS: DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CAR IS? *Every 25.5 Seconds a Vehicle is Stolen in the U.S*

Palos Hills, IL - The nation's motor vehicle thieves continue to favor imports over domestic brands as their targets of opportunity. Hot Wheels, the National Insurance Crime Bureau's companion study to its annual Hot Spots auto theft report, examines data reported to the National Crime Information Center and determines the vehicle make, model, and model year most reported stolen in 2004.

For 2004, the top ten most stolen vehicles in the United States by make, model, and model year were:

1. 1995 Honda Civic
2. 1989 Toyota Camry
3. 1991 Honda Accord
4. 1994 Dodge Caravan
5. 1994 Chevrolet Full Size C/K 1500 Pickup
6. 1997 Ford F150 Series
7. 2003 Dodge Ram Pickup
8. 1990 Acura Integra
9. 1988 Toyota Pickup
10. 1991 Nissan Sentra

In 2004, 1,237,114 motor vehicles were reported stolen which is a decrease of 23,357 vehicles from 2003. Overall in the United States, motor vehicle theft was down by 1.9 percent.

"The slight decrease in auto theft is a positive sign. Now all of us in the fight against vehicle theft and insurance fraud must ensure that we continue the momentum and bring this national crime problem under control," said Robert M. Bryant, President and Chief Executive Officer of the NICB.

The FBI Uniform Crime Report divides the nation into four regions. In the Northeast, with 18.6 percent of the nation's population, auto theft was down 9.7 percent from 2003. In the Midwest, with 22.4 percent of the population, auto theft was down 4.4 percent. The South with 36.1 percent of the population showed a decrease in vehicle theft of 2.9 percent. Meanwhile, the West, with 23.0 percent of the population, was the only region that posted an increase—3.2 percent—over its 2003 number.

NICB encourages everyone to follow its "layered approach" to auto theft protection by employing simple, low-cost suggestions to make their vehicles less attractive to thieves. NICB's four layers are:

Common Sense: The cheapest form of defense is to simply employ the anti-theft devices that are standard on all vehicles: locks. Lock your car and take your keys.

Warning Device: Having and using a visible or audible warning device is another item that can ensure that your car remains where you left it.

Immobilizing Device: "Kill" switches, fuel cut-offs, and smart keys are among the devices which are high and low tech, but extremely effective. Generally speaking, if your car won't start, it won't get stolen.

Tracking Device: On the higher end of high tech are the newer devices which can alert you—and law enforcement—the moment an unauthorized user moves your vehicle.

Auto theft and related fraudulent activity is only a part of the \$30 billion it costs insurance companies and their policyholders each year. You can do your part to help stop this criminal activity by reporting suspected fraud to NICB, anonymously, at 1-800-TEL-NICB (1-800-835-6422) or by visiting our Web site www.nicb.org. The National Insurance Crime Bureau is the nation's premiere non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to fighting insurance fraud and vehicle theft for the benefit of its member companies, their policyholders, and the general public through information analysis, investigations, training and public awareness.

For more information on Hot Wheels, please visit our Web site at www.nicb.org.