

Motor vehicle thefts are on the rise as thieves target cars left running unattended or those parked with keys left inside. Of the eight vehicles reported stolen in the months of October 2020 through February 01, 2021, five were running unattended at gas stations, public parking lots or in a residential driveway, two were unlocked with keys left inside and in one instance, the key was obtained by other means. The Newark Police Department is sharing information on how these crimes occur along with simple ways motorists can help reduce thefts and protect their property.

Method of Thefts

The reported incidents have indicated suspects are alone or with another person as they search the area for cars left running unattended at gas stations, convenience stores or parking lots. When they observe an unattended vehicle running or see the driver “make a quick dash” into a store, the suspects simply walk over, enter the victim’s vehicle and flee with it. The act of stealing the vehicle takes only a few seconds. The victims return from their quick dash into a store to see thieves driving their vehicle away.

Another method used involves suspects walking parking lots or residential areas “car shopping” by trying the handles of parked vehicles. The suspects enter vehicles that are unlocked, quickly checking for keys left in the ignition or laying on seats, etc. These incidents typically occur during overnight hours. An accomplice drives slowly near the suspects to allow an easy getaway should he or she be discovered.

Help Prevent Auto Theft with these Crime Prevention Tips

Motor vehicle thefts are often crimes of opportunity with thieves taking advantage of perceived easy targets. The Newark Police Department recommends following the below safety tips to keep your vehicles and property safe.

- Be aware of your surroundings, especially in parking lots, convenience stores and gas stations.
- Close and lock all windows and doors when you park, even in your driveway. Double click the lock button on the key fob to receive a confirmation beep/chirp or pull on the door handle to verify it is locked.
- Park in well-lit areas and activate exterior lights at your home.
- Never leave the area while your vehicle is running – even for a short duration of time. Doing so is illegal in New York State.
- Do not leave your keys, key fobs, or valet keys or ANYTHING you consider valuable in your vehicle. This includes keys to a secondary vehicle.
- Ensure that your vehicle is turned OFF when leaving it unattended. Vehicles with keyless ignition systems can be driven for extended periods of time even if the key fob is not inside the car. Be sure to read your owner’s manual carefully and familiarize yourself with how to operate your vehicle’s keyless ignition system properly.
- Keep information, such as the make, model, model year, license plate and VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) easily accessible in the event your vehicle is stolen.

The Village of Newark Police reports the following statistics for the month of January 2021.

Total Events responded to or initiated: 729

Incident reports completed: 87

Arrests made: 21 (Felony level – 12, Misdemeanor level- 15, Violation level – 1)

Motor Vehicle Crashes investigated: 24

Traffic stops conducted: 61

Uniform Traffic Tickets issued: 34 (23 person)

The Village of Newark Police reports the following statistics for the year 2020.

Total Events responded to or initiated: 9960

Incident Reports completed: 1296

Arrests: 421 (Felony - 102, Misdemeanor – 308, Violation – 11)

Motor Vehicle Crashes investigated: 251

Traffic Stops conducted: 751

Uniform Traffic Tickets issued: 448