



BERKELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEDIA SERVICES

2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 981-5900, TDD: (510) 981-5799, police@ci.berkeley.ca.us
Douglas N. Hambleton, Chief of Police



Contact: **Officer Ed Galvan** –BPD Public Information Officer (510) 981-5752

*** CRIME ALERT ***

Berkeley, California (Wednesday, November 01, 2006) –The Berkeley Police Department wants to remind community members to remain vigilant when it comes to auto thefts. This past weekend (Oct.27, 28 & 29) there were **17 cars reported stolen** in the City of Berkeley.

This number is a slight increase in the number of auto-thefts normally reported stolen during a three day time period, but the total number of reported auto thefts is down from **78** last month (September '06). So far this month in October, there have been **63** reports taken.

Other Facts:

2005 – total number of autos reported stolen (Jan. 1 – Oct.30) = 1077

2006 – total number of autos reported stolen (Jan. 1 - Oct.30) = 954

Berkeley Police Dept. Auto Theft Investigators encourage community members to actively participate in reducing crime. Employ the following crime prevention measures to reduce your chances of becoming a victim of auto theft.

- ✓ Use a steering wheel locking device.
- ✓ When leaving your vehicle, regardless of the length of time, remove the keys from the ignition, close all windows and lock the doors.
- ✓ At night, park your vehicle in a well-lit area.
- ✓ Never leave property such as purses, wallets, cell phones, I-pods, cameras, backpacks or other high theft items visible in your car.

Community members should use the above measures whenever possible. Additional security can be obtained by the installation of a vehicle security system and / or the installation of a steering wheel locking device. The steering wheel to brake pedal device also works well. These devices are commercially available and offer a deterrent to the inexperienced auto thief. Other systems such as car alarms, hidden switches and "LOJACK" type items help complete the package. Think of protecting your vehicle like the layering of an onion: each layer of protection you add reduces the likelihood of your vehicle being stolen or broken into.

These and other crime prevention tips can be found on the Berkeley Police Dept. website <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/police/> or by calling the Community Services Bureau at 981-5808.

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