



What is the Auto Theft Prevention Authority all about?

There's a lot more to reducing auto theft than just locking your doors or chirping your alarm when you leave your car. Auto thieves get smarter every day. Every time some breakthrough technology comes along to keep cars more secure, a thief comes along to challenge that technology. That's why we're here. Our goal is to stay one step ahead of car thieves by working with law enforcement as well as the driving community to get the word out about new trends in auto theft and how NOT to become a statistic. When cars are stolen, insurance rates go up and we all pay the price. The Auto Theft Prevention Authority is funded through an assessment of nearly 400 insurance companies in Pennsylvania. No tax dollars are used.

#### **The Authority in Pennsylvania: eight-year record of reducing auto theft.**

The Authority, created under Act 171 of 1994, has supplied 15 law enforcement/investigative units with grant funding since 1996. This funding comes from annual assessments of auto insurance companies in Pennsylvania. To date, these agencies have been awarded more than \$46.4 million to help local auto theft units investigate and prosecute auto theft through additional personnel, modernized equipment, automobiles, special training seminars and public outreach measures.

The Uniform Crime Report (UCR), compiled each year by the Pennsylvania State Police, is the most complete and reliable indicator of criminal activity available. The 2004 UCR data shows that motor vehicle theft declined again in 2004, and since the ATPA's inception in 1995, annual auto theft rates have declined by more than one-third.

Last year, the Authority continued to focus on reaching the 18 to 25 year-old audience. Research commissioned by the Authority indicated that members of this target group are nonchalant with regard to protecting their cars from being stolen. The Authority reinforced the proactive steps taken in 2002 with brochures, radio and outdoor advertising to reach this vulnerable population.

In 2004, law enforcement officials recovered stolen vehicles worth \$26.5 million and parts estimated at \$1 million\*. The total value recovered since 1996 in Pennsylvania is \$211.7 million in stolen vehicles and \$13.5 million in parts. Clearly, the grantees are having an impact on auto theft and vehicle recovery in Pennsylvania.

\* UCR numbers are subject to continual edit and not complete until the UCR Annual Report is compiled. The 2004 UCR Annual Report is expected October 2005.