

Pennsylvania

THE CRIME SCENE

EXPLANATION OF THE AUTHORITY

Auto theft is a serious crime. It is invasive and leaves victims with a heart-in-their-throat feeling of helplessness. But thieves do not care. They steal cars for transportation, to strip and sell in-demand parts, to sell or exchange for drugs, and to commit other serious and violent crimes. The Authority has been working for the last 14 years to stay one step ahead of the crime, 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.

As thieves become smarter, more organized and more aggressive, we continue to build our strong working relationships with law enforcement and community partners to reduce auto theft. Our organization and our partners know that when cars are stolen, insurance rates go up and we all pay the price.

The Auto Theft Prevention Authority, created by Act 171 of 1994, is funded through an assessment of nearly 400 insurance companies doing business in Pennsylvania and uses no tax dollars.

The Authority has supplied funding to law enforcement/investigative units as well as crime prevention organizations since 1995 to address auto theft. To date, these agencies have been awarded more than \$75 million to help local and state auto theft units investigate and prosecute auto theft through additional personnel, modernized equipment, automobiles, special training seminars and public outreach measures.

The efforts of everyone involved are working. 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 2009 UCR data shows that motor vehicle theft declined again in 2009; and, since the ATPA's inception in 1995, annual auto-theft rates have declined by more than 60 percent. Without the funded units in place to address auto theft, the numbers would tell a much different story.

In 2009, funded law enforcement units recovered stolen vehicles worth \$27.7 million and parts estimated at more than \$563,000. Since its inception (1995), the ATPA funded law enforcement units have recovered stolen vehicles and parts worth \$403.4 million. Clearly, the grantees are having an impact on auto theft and vehicle recovery in Pennsylvania.

Reading, PA

VEHICLE STOLEN

PENNSYLVANIA VS NATIONAL AUTO THEFT RATES

Since the Authority's inception through 2008, theft rates in Pennsylvania dropped by nearly 57%. During that same time frame, national theft rates fell 37%. It is clear that the coordinated effort in Pennsylvania is making an impact.

* National theft rate from the FBI was only available through 2008 at the time this report was published.