



PRESS RELEASE

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VEHICLE THEFT TREND REVERSES IN CALIFORNIA

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – After back-to-back annual increases in the number of vehicle thefts, California reversed course in 2017. The 6.2 percent decline in vehicle theft statewide is the largest decrease since 2014, and may be attributed to the advances in anti-theft technology, aggressive police work, and the public's vigilance.

“Although the overall number of vehicles stolen is down, there is still much more work to be done,” said California Highway Patrol (CHP) Commissioner Warren Stanley. “Law enforcement can't solve the problem alone. The CHP will continue to partner with local law enforcement on vehicle theft task forces to combat auto theft in California and asks the public to do its part.”

In 2017, 175,351 vehicles were taken by thieves, at an estimated total value of approximately \$1.3 billion. Although decreases were noted in many of California's largest counties, many smaller, rural counties saw increases in vehicle theft.

As one of the most populous states in the nation, with the highest numbers of registered automobiles, California sits at the top of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's list of states with the most vehicles stolen in a calendar year. Based on CHP data, a vehicle is stolen every three minutes in California.

To assist drivers in keeping their vehicles safe, the CHP offers the following tips:

- Park in well-lit, secure, or highly visible locations
- Lock vehicle doors and close windows
- Use an alarm system
- Do not leave a vehicle unattended with its engine running
- Never leave valuable items in plain sight
- Report suspicious activity to law enforcement

“Vehicle theft is a crime of opportunity; do not make it easy for a thief to gain access to your vehicle,” said Commissioner Stanley. “A little bit of prevention will go a long way.”

The mission of the CHP is to provide the highest level of Safety, Service, and Security.

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