

Breaking the habit

North Shore News

November 1, 2015 12:00 AM

When it comes to thefts from autos, the North Shore has become a bull's-eye for car thieves in recent months.

Since July, there have been nearly 700 instances of criminals helping themselves to iPhones, wallets, sunglasses - anything that isn't welded down - from vehicles. And for the most part, we have only ourselves to blame.

Despite news reports about the break-ins, and repeated warnings from police, North Shore residents aren't changing their bad habits, believing their neighbourhoods won't be targeted. But from quiet leafy streets in Deep Cove to Horseshoe Bay, thieves continue to find easy pickings in unlocked vehicles with valuables left in sight.

It's become such an epidemic that police held a news conference this week reminding the public to essentially grab a brain. To restate the obvious: **theft from autos is a crime of opportunity**. Police say the thefts can occur in less than a minute and **usually take place between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m.** Police noted one car thief told them when he found a string of cars with no valuables obvious, he'd immediately move on to the next neighbourhood.

The tips are painfully obvious, but so many residents are ignoring common sense that they need to be underlined: **lock your vehicle and remove valuables and electronics**. Sure, it's easy to let your guard down living in low-crime communities. But thieves know those habits too.

Continue to leave shiny gadgets and cash in vehicles, and the cycle will selfperpetuate. As we should have learned by now, **there's a difference between feeling safe and being stupid.**

© 2015 North Shore News

[Sign up for the North Shore News FREE digital newsletter to receive top headlines from each issue in your Inbox. \(http://www.nsnews.com/newsletter/subscribe\)](http://www.nsnews.com/newsletter/subscribe)