



HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



CRIME PREVENTION TIP

September 30, 2009

SUBJECT: GPS Security

Some things to consider regarding security as it relates to our growing dependency on modern electronic devices.

GPS Units

Men, here is where we have to admit it... we love these things because now we *really* don't have to stop and ask directions. The drawback to these devices is that they have to be very visible in your car to work properly, and thieves hone in on anything of value that stands out like this. Once the thief breaks into your car, the problem beyond that initial incident can be greatly compounded. Here's the scenario:

You're out and about somewhere for an extended period of time (such as a sporting event, concert, or at work), your vehicle is broken into and your GPS device is stolen. Many of these devices have the ability for programming a "home" location or back-tracking to the previous destination. So now the thief knows where you live. Problems with this are obvious, but not catastrophic in and of itself, as it's not very hard to figure out where someone lives.

But what else do many of us keep in our cars to make coming home easier? An automatic garage door opener. Now the thief can pull right into the garage and close the door behind him to conceal his efforts to enter the house (if the inner door is even locked). Remember, he knows that you are occupied for a long time at the other location and can now take his time cleaning out your home.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- 1) Take precautions in safeguarding valuables in your car (preferably don't leave them there at all, but if you must, store them out of sight & lock the doors-*always*).
- 2) If you use a GPS, refrain from programming in your home address. Use a nearby intersection or commercial business.
- 3) Rethink use of your garage remote. Yes, they are terribly convenient, but there is a criminal potential there. You're basically giving a burglar at least partial access to your home if you lose control of it.
- 4) Always lock your inner garage door and use your home security alarm system.

In our next crime prevention tip, we'll talk about cell phone security issues.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact

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