

## **NICB Report Shows Vehicle Thefts Driven Down—Again** ***West Coast is Home to the Top 10 Hot Spots***

**DES PLAINES, Ill., June 21, 2011** – The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) reported today that 2010 continued the trend of declining national vehicle thefts for the seventh consecutive year. While the top five hot spots for 2010 showed an increase in thefts over the previous year, the other areas on the top 10 list actually had fewer thefts.

For 2010, the 10 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) with the highest vehicle theft rates were:

<b>2010 Ranking</b>		<b>2009 Ranking</b>
1.	Fresno, Calif.	5
2.	Modesto, Calif.	2
3.	Bakersfield-Delano, Calif.	3
4.	Spokane, Wash.	18
5.	Vallejo-Fairfield, Calif.	16
6.	Sacramento/Arden-Arcade/Roseville, Calif.	11
7.	Stockton, Calif.	4
8.	Visalia-Porterville, Calif.	8
9.	San Francisco/Oakland/Fremont, Calif.	7
10.	Yakima, Wash.	6

NICB's *Hot Spots* report examines vehicle theft data obtained from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) for each of the nation's MSAs. MSAs are designated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and often include areas much larger than the cities for which they are named. For example, the Fresno, Calif., MSA includes all thefts within the entire *county* of Fresno, not just the city of Fresno.

The FBI's preliminary 2010 crime statistics published last month indicate a 7.2 percent drop in vehicle thefts from 2009's number of 794,616. If that estimate holds when the final statistics are published in the fall, it would result in the lowest annual vehicle thefts since 1967.

The full *Hot Spots* report is available at [www.nicb.org](http://www.nicb.org).

"While improved anti-theft technology and law enforcement efforts have had a significant impact on thefts, professional criminal rings and gangs are active in parts of the country and stopping them is the ongoing challenge," said NICB CEO and President Joe Wehrle.

NICB recommends following these four "layers of protection" against vehicle theft:

**Common Sense** – The common sense approach to protection is the easiest and most cost-effective way to thwart would-be thieves. You should always:

- Remove your keys from the ignition
- Lock your doors /close your windows
- Park in a well-lit area

**Warning Device** – The second layer of protection is a visible or audible device which alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular devices include:

- Audible alarms
- Steering column collars
- Steering wheel/brake pedal lock
- Brake locks
- Wheel locks
- Theft deterrent decals
- Identification markers in or on vehicle
- VIN etching
- Micro dot marking

**Immobilizing Device** – The third layer of protection is a device which prevents thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle. Some electronic devices have computer chips in ignition keys. Other devices inhibit the flow of electricity or fuel to the engine until a hidden switch or button is activated. Some examples are:

- Smart keys
- Fuse cut-offs
- Kill switches
- Starter, ignition, and fuel pump disablers
- Wireless ignition authentication

**Tracking Device** – The final layer of protection is a tracking device which emits a signal to police or a monitoring station when the vehicle is stolen. Tracking devices are very effective in helping authorities recover stolen vehicles. Some systems employ “telematics” which combine GPS and wireless technologies to allow remote monitoring of a vehicle. If the vehicle is moved, the system will alert the owner and the vehicle can be tracked via computer.

Anyone with information concerning vehicle theft and insurance fraud can report it anonymously by calling toll-free 1-800-TEL-NICB (1-800-835-6422), texting keyword “fraud” to TIP411 (847411) or by visiting our Web site at [www.nicb.org](http://www.nicb.org).

About the National Insurance Crime Bureau: headquartered in Des Plaines, Ill., the NICB is the nation’s leading not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to preventing, detecting and defeating insurance fraud and vehicle theft through data analytics, investigations, training, legislative advocacy and public awareness. The NICB is supported by more than 1,100 property and casualty insurance companies and self-insured organizations. NICB member companies wrote over \$317 billion in insurance premiums in 2010, or approximately 80 percent of the nation’s property/casualty insurance. That includes more than 93 percent (\$151 billion) of the nation’s personal auto insurance. To learn more visit [www.nicb.org](http://www.nicb.org).