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Crime down in Bancroft

By Sarah Sobanski

Thefts are down 24 per cent from last year in Bancroft.

Bancroft OPP communications officer Philippe Regamey said break-ins are up in downtown core, which makes it seem like there has been more crime this year. In fact, from the start of the year to now, 85 thefts have been reported where last year there were 112.

?Lots were cleared by charges and lots have been unfounded. [For example] fail to pay for gas then owner shows up and pays, or unsolved as of this time,? said Regamey. ?For the last few months with thefts there have been a total of 19. Last year for the same time frame we were at 33.?

Break and enters are also down, 33 this year compared to 55 last year. Fewer vehicles have been stolen too, 10 last year but eight this year.

Regamey said to cut this down further it's important for people to remember to lock their vehicles.

?People need to lock their vehicles at all times as often items get stolen from the vehicles which results in a call to the police,? he said noting people still leave their keys in their ignitions.

The OPP's Lock It or Loose It campaign focuses on tips to keep car owners safe. According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada supported campaign, ?auto theft costs Canadians more than $1 billion every year.? It states ?about half of all stolen vehicles are used to commit another crime or are driven ? often recklessly ? for simple purposes of transportation (this is called ?destination theft'). In these cases, the thieves are usually amateurs who take advantage of owner negligence by grabbing the first vehicle they can find that's been left unsecured. In the other half of cases, vehicles are stolen by professional thieves involved in organized crime rings.?

Tips from the campaign include:

Always roll up your vehicle's windows, lock the doors and pocket the key.

Never leave your vehicle unattended while it is running.

If you have a garage, use it and lock the door as well as your vehicle.

Never leave your car keys in plain view or in an easily accessible area.

Keep your vehicle registration certificate and proof of insurance on you at all times. Don't leave these documents in your glove compartment.

Always park your vehicle in a well-lit area.

Never leave valuable objects or packages in full view. Put them in the trunk.

Give only your ignition key to a parking lot attendant. Keep all other keys with you.