

Redding Police Department

Neighborhood Watch Scam Alert

2010-1

Paper Diversion Auto Theft

This is the latest way criminals are using to steal cars! Here's how it works and how to prevent it from happening to you!

The Scam

You come out of a store and walk to your car in the parking lot. You get in, start the car, and get ready to back out. You look in the rear view mirror and see a piece of paper taped in the center of the rear window, obstructing your vision. You think someone posted a flyer of some sort on your window so you step out to remove it. Once you step out, Mr. Criminal pops up out of seemingly nowhere, jumps into your car, and speeds away. Not only does he have your car, but he also has your keys, registration, purse, phone, iPod, and anything else that's in the car at the time. These guys rely on you to assume that someone has placed a flyer on your window and know that most people will immediately get out of a car to remove it.

What can you do?

As we discussed in a previous alert, always scan the parking lot when exiting a store. Do all cars have flyers on them? Is there anybody hanging around in the parking lot? If your car is the only one with a flyer on the back window, alert store/mall security and let them check the area and remove the flyer. If you get into your car and notice a flyer on the back window, lock your doors, roll up your windows, and drive away. Don't stop and talk to anyone, and once you are clear of the area, pull over in a safe place and remove the paper, or wait until you get home to remove it. Pass this one along to family and friends!

Ed Ochoa, Retired RPD

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator