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ICBC and Abbotsford Police help residents protect their older model vehicles from auto crime

ICBC, Abbotsford Police and community policing volunteers today introduced the award-winning Operation Lock Up program to help curb the theft of older vehicles in Abbotsford.

Older model vehicles often aren't equipped with anti-theft devices, making them prime bait for car thieves. In Abbotsford, pre-2001 Honda Civics, Honda Accords and Jeep Cherokees are at a high risk of being stolen. The focus of this initiative is to distribute steering wheel locks, while supplies last, to local residents who own these target vehicles and other pre-2001 vehicles not equipped with an anti-theft device.

Operation Lock Up is part of ICBC's overall auto crime strategy, which has contributed to a 55 per cent decrease in auto crime in B.C. since 2003. Just last year, Surrey Board of Trade awarded ICBC with the Police and Business Partnership Award for last year's Operation Lock Up initiative in Surrey and White Rock.

Today, Abbotsford Police and community policing volunteers will launch Operation Lock Up with a 'Lock Out Auto Crime' blitz in Abbotsford neighbourhoods. Registered owners of at-risk vehicles will receive a voucher for a free steering wheel lock, as well as prevention tips on actions they can take to protect their vehicle from theft.

Residents can also get a free steering wheel lock by bringing their vehicle registration to the Abbotsford Community Police Office at #5 – 34194 Marshall Road.

"Steering wheel locks are one of the most effective tools to use as a deterrent for car thieves," said Constable Ian MacDonald, Abbotsford Police Public Information Officer. "We're continuing to bring down auto theft rates, but older model vehicles continue to be targeted."

"Any initiative that aims to lower crime in Abbotsford is one I support," said John van Dongen, Abbotsford South MLA. "This new program will help deter auto theft within our community and save people the time and trouble associated with vehicle theft."

"This is a truly integrated effort that brings the community together to promote safer neighbourhoods," said Don Miller, ICBC road safety coordinator. "Protecting your older model vehicle with a steering wheel lock is the most cost effective way of reducing your risk of being the victim of auto crime."

For tips on how to protect your vehicle from thieves visit icbc.com.

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