

AUTO THEFT AND WINDOW ETCHING

Arizona Automobile Theft Authority recommends a layered approach to auto theft protection:

Layer 1 – Practice Common Sense. Always lock your vehicle and take the keys with you. Never leave your vehicle running and unattended. Park in well-lit areas.

Layer 2 – Use Visible and Audible Warning Devices. Enroll in the free watch your car program. Have your vehicle's VIN etched on windows. Use a steering wheel or brake lock. Install an audible alarm.

Layer 3 – Use Immobilizing Devices. Install a kill switch. Use starter, ignition, fuel disablers, or a smart key.

Layer 4 – Use a Tracking Device. They emit a signal to police or monitoring stations when vehicles are stolen. These devices are effective in helping law enforcement recover stolen vehicles.

Automobile Window Etching

V.I.N. etching is the process of permanently etching your vehicle's seventeen (17) digit vehicle identification number on each piece of glass window on the vehicle. Etching your vehicle's V.I.N. serves as a permanent fingerprint of your vehicle. It is considered an effective deterrent against auto theft.

When a vehicle is stolen, the thief must change the identity of the vehicle by changing the V.I.N. plate on the dashboard or else risk being discovered by law enforcement. With a new V.I.N. plate, the thief now has a "new" vehicle, but if the V.I.N. is etched on the windows, the thief must dispose of and replace all windows, which is costly and time consuming. As the thief contemplates stealing your car, he/she will notice the glass etching and may move on to an easier target vehicle.

V.I.N. etching in no way damages the vehicle's windows. It takes approximately ten minutes to etch your vehicle by trained law enforcement personnel. The vehicle owner must be present and show proof of ownership through a driver's license, vehicle registration and vehicle insurance.