

For Immediate Release



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North Arlington Takes Action Against Car Thefts

NORTH ARLINGTON – January 5, 2024 – North Arlington Mayor Daniel H. Pronti is addressing an ongoing concern regarding the recent trend of car thefts and thefts from vehicles locally as well as statewide, announcing a stronger police presence throughout the borough.

There are many contributing factors to the rise in car thefts, such as information being posted on the internet showing step-by-step methods to enter and to steal certain makes and models of vehicles. New Jersey's changes in bail reform – releasing individuals jailed while awaiting trial for low-level offenses – may also be leading to more crimes of opportunity, including vehicle theft.

Thieves seem to be targeting neighborhoods such as North Arlington, where there is historically less crime, in anticipation of some property owners being less proactive in protecting their vehicles.

“Across the State of New Jersey, arrest rates are on the rise while prosecutions are down,” Mayor Pronti said. “Many people throughout Law Enforcement attribute this to the state's bail reform policies, which unfortunately mandate the release of those who are arrested for non-violent crimes (theft, etc.), only to see them committing more of the same crimes as they await prosecution.”

“Gov. Phil Murphy has since proposed several amendments to the state's bail reform laws, but many believe more work needs to be done to help ensure the safety and security of the law abiding residents of our state”, according to the Mayor.

In North Arlington, motor vehicle thefts are up by three from last year to this year. The numbers obtained from the NAPD show 18 vehicles stolen in 2022, while 21 were stolen in 2023. Thefts from motor vehicles have actually “decreased” in north Arlington by three, over the same time.

“Our agency continues to work with our law enforcement partners through intelligence and data sharing to identify crime patterns,” said North Arlington Police Chief Scott Hedenberg. “As a

result, our patrol and investigative divisions are able to respond to each unique circumstance as they arise.

“These types of practices have resulted in an increase in arrests for vehicle and thefts of property from within a vehicle,” he added. “For example, in 2022, our department made four arrests for these types of incidents and saw an increase to 16 arrests in 2023.”

Chief Hedenberg stresses that residents should report any suspicious activity as soon as possible. “Real time reporting and information is one of law enforcement’s greatest assets in identifying crime, and those committing it,” he said.

Councilman Brian Fitzhenry added: “Our Police Department has been converted to a new work schedule, which will provide more police presence, around the clock, in an effort to better aid our residents and their property.” That new schedule began at midnight on January 1.

North Arlington residents can also help deter car theft by:

1. Locking car doors and windows
2. Keeping valuables out of plain view
3. Removing keys and fobs from the vehicle
4. Parking in well-lit areas
5. Using immobilizer systems
6. Implementing tracking technology

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