

# MEDIA RELEASE



**Kennewick Police Department - "Committed to your Safety"**

**\*\*\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \*\*\***

**Date:** Wednesday, April 13, 2022

**Time:** 3:53 PM

**Website:** [www.go2kennewick.com/police](http://www.go2kennewick.com/police)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE ON-DUTY PIO OR:**

Lieutenant Jason Kiel, Public Information Officer

**Phone:** 509-582-1317 (office)

**E-mail:** [jason.kiel@ci.kennewick.wa.us](mailto:jason.kiel@ci.kennewick.wa.us)

**Social Media:** @KennewickPolice

**Non-Investigative Informational Announcement**

**Case Number:**

**Type of Incident:**

**Date / Time of Incident:** /

**Location of Incident:**

*Do not release suspect name if they are a juvenile.*

**Suspect (Age) / City Residence:**  **Suspect in Custody**

**Charges:**

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**Charges:**

*Verify spelling as the spell check does not work with this field.*

**Summary of Incident / Details:**

Today, The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) released data on vehicle thefts. Throughout Washington State, law enforcement agencies have reported a significant increase in vehicle thefts since July 2021 when new legislative changes were put in to place. These changes were collectively known as "Police Reform Laws". The data shows that in July 2021, about 2200 vehicle thefts were reported statewide. In March 2022, vehicle theft reports increased to about 4200, which is a 93% increase from July 2021 (see attached graph). On a month-to-month comparison, comparing March 2021 and March 2022, there was a 99% increase in vehicle thefts throughout the state.

The City of Kennewick has seen the same trend with a significant increase in vehicle thefts. In March 2021 there were 9 and in March 2022, 84 were reported. On a year-by-year comparison, January-March 2021 showed 41 thefts versus the same month range in 2022 which showed 210 vehicle thefts; a 412% increase. Statistics show that during the July 2021 through March 2022 time period that WASPC reported on, there was a 191% increase (see attached graph) of vehicle thefts in the City of Kennewick.



The concern with the increase of vehicle thefts is that a person or a family becomes a victim to each vehicle theft. People are adversely effected in the daily living of their lives, which include activities like going to work, taking kids to school, caring for other family and friends, and other important daily activities. Many of the vehicles are being recovered in the area but most are littered with drug paraphernalia which makes them unsafe for immediate use.

Chief Guerrero has stated, "It takes all members of the community to reduce crime and contribute to safer neighborhoods." With that in mind, the Kennewick Police Department is offering some preventative suggestions.

Although nothing is full proof, here are some suggestions to assist in protecting your vehicle -

- \* Lock your car doors and keep your windows rolled up.
- \* Remove vehicle keys from the vehicle. Do not let your vehicle warm-up unattended.
- \* Park in well-lit areas.
- \* If you have a garage, use it to park your vehicle.
- \* Install an audible alarm system.
- \* Do not leave valuables in your vehicle, including firearms.
- \* Be situationally aware of what is going on in your neighborhood and report suspicious activity to the police at the moment that it is occurring.

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If anyone has information about this incident, please call the non-emergency number at 509-628-0333 and reference the above case number. Anonymous tips can also be provided online at [www.kpdtips.com](http://www.kpdtips.com).

Posted to Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and/or YouTube)

Photos, Audio, and/or Video Attached

**Prepared by:** J. Kiel     PIO /  Supervisor

**Date / Time:** 04-13-2022 / 1551