Motor Vehicle Theft

Definition

In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, motor vehicle theft is defined as the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is defined in the UCR Program as a self-propelled vehicle that runs on land surfaces and not on rails. Examples of motor vehicles include sport utility vehicles, automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters, all-terrain vehicles, and snowmobiles. Motor vehicle theft does not include farm equipment, bulldozers, airplanes, construction equipment, or watercraft such as motorboats, sailboats, houseboats, or jet skis. The taking of a motor vehicle for temporary use by persons having lawful access is excluded from this definition.

Overview

- There were an estimated 721,885 thefts of motor vehicles nationwide in 2019. The estimated rate of motor vehicle thefts was 219.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. (See Table 1.)

- The estimated number of motor vehicle thefts decreased 4.0 percent in 2019 when compared with the 2018 estimates, but rose 1.2 percent when compared with the 2015 estimates and dropped 2.4 percent when compared with the 2010 estimates. (See Table 1A.)

- More than $6 billion ($6.4) was lost nationwide to motor vehicle thefts in 2019. The average dollar loss per stolen vehicle was $8,886. (Based on Tables 1 and 23.)

- In 2019, of all motor vehicles stolen, 74.5 percent were automobiles. (Based on Table 19.)

Expanded data

Expanded offense data are the details of the various offenses that the UCR Program collects beyond the count of how many crimes law enforcement agencies report. These details may include the type of weapon used in a crime, type or value of items stolen, and

so forth. In addition, expanded data include trends (for example, 2-year comparisons) and rates per 100,000 inhabitants.

Expanded information regarding motor vehicle theft is available in the following tables:

Trends (2-year): Tables 12, 13, 14, and 15

Rates (per 100,000 inhabitants): Tables 16, 17, 18, and 19

Offense Analysis: Tables 23 and 24

Vehicle Type: Tables 15 and 19

Motor Vehicle Theft Table, "Motor Vehicle Theft, Percent Distribution by Region, 2019"

What you won't find on this page

- Makes and models of stolen motor vehicles. The UCR Program does not collect this information.

- Clearance and arrest data for motor vehicle theft.