



March 6, 2020

## **Weld County Sheriff's Office seeing uptick in vehicle thefts, burglaries**

The Weld County Sheriff's Office is asking the public to be vigilant when it comes to securing and protecting their homes and vehicles.

The sheriff's office has been seeing for the last several years a steady upward trend in the number of reports of stolen vehicles. Data suggests stolen vehicle reports will continue to climb in 2020.

The sheriff's office received a total of 20 reports of stolen vehicles in January and February of this year, which is up from 14 during the same time period in 2017. There was a total of 100 reports of stolen vehicles in 2017, followed by 95 in 2018 and 107 in 2019.

Of the 107 vehicles stolen last year, 86 were recovered by investigators for a recovery rate of 82 percent, which was on par with or better than law enforcement agencies in the Denver metro area.

Weld County also is a dumping ground for vehicles stolen from other parts of the state and deputies are seeing a major increase in the number of abandoned vehicles in the county. So far this year, Weld County deputies have recovered 19 vehicles reported stolen from other jurisdictions.

In 2017, deputies recovered a total of 68 stolen vehicles that had been abandoned in the county. That statistic jumped to 81 in 2018, and 101 in 2019.

Many incidents of both stolen and recovered vehicles are occurring on the south side of the county, in the area of U.S. 85 east of Fort Lupton to Hudson and south to Lochbuie. Many of the vehicles reported stolen were unlocked. Some had keys left in the ignition.

The sheriff's office also is seeing an increase in burglaries in the same area. In many cases, the perpetrators are entering homes through broken or unsecured windows. There also have been reports of burglars entering homes through unlocked doors or open garages.

"Many of the reports we're taking are crimes of opportunity," said Weld County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division Capt. Alan Caldwell. "Crime prevention begins with you; don't be a victim by choice. Make sure your homes are secure when you leave for the day and your cars are locked when you come home at night."



Because vandalism, theft, burglaries and other crimes tend to increase during the spring, the Weld County Sheriff's Office is asking residents to be alert and to report any suspicious activity by dialing 911. If the suspicious activity involves a vehicle, be sure to note the license plate.

In addition to dialing 911, residents with information regarding possible criminal activity can call the Weld County Sheriff's Office at (970) 356-4015 or Northern Colorado Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**. **Tips can also be submitted through the Crime Stoppers website at [www.crimeshurt.com](http://www.crimeshurt.com). Those submitting tips through Crime Stoppers that lead to the arrest and filing of charges on a suspect(s) may be eligible for a cash reward.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Reams'.

Steve Reams – Sheriff