Auto thieves, burglars hard at work during holidays

(Lubbock, TX) Black Friday is only a memory, and Cyber Monday has passed. But the bargain hunting season has only just begun for one type of shopper . . . . . vehicle criminals!

The Texas Auto Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority (ABTPA), a division of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, reminds drivers that a vehicle is burglarized every two minutes and stolen every eight minutes in the state.

These crimes can escalate during the holiday season when drivers are frequently out shopping for gifts and traveling to visit friends and family. During these times, drivers are more likely to leave belongings within view inside vehicles as well as become negligent in locking doors and taking keys.

To make matters worse, a thief won't necessarily stop with taking your vehicle and the things inside. They may also look for personal documents that can help them steal your identity or that indicate where you live so they can burglarize additional property from your home.

In other words, the theft or burglary of your vehicle may simply be a gateway to the commission of additional crimes.

"We know auto burglars scout malls, shopping centers, entertainment venues, hotels, and other business parking lots this time of year looking for opportunities to break into vehicles," said Kat Anderson, crime prevention coordinator South Plains Auto Theft Task Force. "Drivers need to understand that almost anything they leave inside their vehicles can be valuable to a thief. And when vehicles are left unlocked and unattended, drivers are inviting thieves to walk away with everything they see inside, which often includes gifts, purses, wallets, packages, electronics, suitcases, garage door openers, keys, and personal information."

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, thieves committed 221,065 acts of vehicle burglary and stole 63,379 vehicles in Texas during 2011.

In some jurisdictions, more than half of vehicle thefts occurred because doors were unlocked and keys left inside. But drivers can avoid becoming part of these statistics.

The ABTPA and its 29 vehicle crime task forces in Texas offer three basic safety tips to motorists to help prevent vehicle crimes during the holidays and throughout the year: remove belongings from view, secure vehicles, and never leave keys inside.

In addition to practicing these prevention methodologies, drivers should park in areas that are well-lit, near surveillance cameras (if available), and near heavy foot and vehicle traffic. The more thieves feel threatened by detection, the less likely they are to focus on targets in such vulnerable areas.

The Texas Auto Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1991 to fund programs to reduce vehicle thefts. The passing of House Bill 1887 in 2007 expanded the scope of the agency to include automobile burglary and added that term to the Authority's title.

For more information on the ABTPA, auto burglary, vehicle theft, prevention, statistics, contacts for any of ABTPA's 29 Texas vehicle crime task forces, public service announcements, or to schedule an interview with task force personnel, call 806 775-1569.

Oil & Gas

Texas rigs account for half in U.S.

AUSTIN — The Texas average rig count as of November 2012 was 853, representing about 49 percent of all active land rigs in the United States.

In the last 12 months, total Texas reported production was 498 million barrels of oil and 7.2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

The Texas Railroad Commission's estimated final production for September 2012 is 47,876,723 barrels of crude oil and 509,106,484 Mcf (thousand cubic feet) of gas well gas.

The Commission derives final production numbers by multiplying the preliminary September 2012 production totals of 40,307,058 barrels of crude oil and 436,626,487 Mcf of gas well gas by a production adjustment factor of 1.1878 for crude oil and 1.1660 for gas well gas. (These production totals do not include casinghead gas or condensate.)

Texas natural gas storage reported to the Commission for October 2012 was 454,254,178 Mcf compared to 434,964,586 Mcf in October 2011. The October 2012 gas storage estimate is 457,839,976 Mcf.

The Texas Railroad Commission's Oil and Gas Division set initial December 2012 natural gas production allowables for prorated fields in the state to meet market demand of 10,261,563 Mcf (thousand cubic feet).

In setting the initial December 2012 allowables, the Commission used historical production figures from previous months, producers' demand forecasts for the coming month, and adjusted the figures based on well capability.

These initial allowables will be adjusted after actual production for December 2012 is reported.

Texas Monthly Oil and Gas Statistics

October permits to drill

The Commission issued a total of 1,873 original drilling permits in October, 2012, compared to 1,771 in October, 2011.

The October total included 1,686 permits to drill new oil and gas wells, 44 to re-enter existing well bores, and 143 for re-completions. Permits issued in October, 2012 included 555 oil, 135 gas, 1,096 oil and gas, 79 injection, one service and seven other permits.

September crude oil production

Texas preliminary September, 2012 crude oil production averaged 1,343,569 barrels daily, up from the 1,011,001 barrels daily average of September 2011.

The preliminary Texas crude oil production figure for September, 2012 is 40,307,058 barrels, up from 30,330,018 barrels reported during September, 2011.

October oil and gas completions

In October, 2012, operators reported 1,059 oil, 257 gas, 32 injection and four other completions compared to 704 oil, 229 gas, 22 injection and one other completion in October, 2011.

Total well completions for 2012 year-to-date are 12,188 up from 6,900 recorded during the same period in 2011.

Operators reported 605 holes plugged and two dry holes in October, 2012 compared to 863 holes plugged and zero dry holes in October, 2011.

September natural gas production

Texas oil and gas wells produced 529,633,737 Mcf (thousand cubic feet) of gas based upon preliminary production figures for September, 2012 up from the September, 2011 preliminary gas production total of 527,116,072 Mcf. Texas preliminary September total gas production averaged 17,654,458 Mcf (thousand cubic feet) a day.

Texas production in September, 2012 came from 142,859 oil wells and 90,604 gas wells.

Area district permits and completions

RRC District: (7B) WEST CENTRAL TEXAS
Permits To Drill Oil/Gas Holes: 88
Oil Completions: 11
Gas Completions: 7
RRC District: (8) MIDLAND
Permits To Drill Oil/Gas Holes: 588
Oil Completions: 444
Gas Completions: 1
RRC District: (8A) LUBBOCK AREA
Permits To Drill Oil/Gas Holes: 110
Oil Completions: 58
Gas Completions: 1
RRC District: (9) NORTH TEXAS
Permits To Drill Oil/Gas Holes: 185
Oil Completions: 65
Gas Completions: 72
RRC District: (10) PANHANDLE
Permits To Drill Oil/Gas Holes: 65
Oil Completions: 33
Gas Completions: 35

September Texas Top 10

COUNTY - CRUDE OIL (BBLS)
1. KARNES - 2,946,392
2. ANDREWS - 2,486,766
3. GAINES - 1,993,334
4. GONZALES - 1,958,020
5. ECTOR - 1,926,952
6. YOAKUM - 1,698,381
7. MIDLAND- 1,682,433
8. UPTON - 1,671,091
9. LA SALLE - 1,558,283
10. MARTIN - 1,536,643

* * * * * *

COUNTY - TOTAL GAS (MCF)
1. TARRANT - 66,768,026
2. JOHNSON - 34,142,768
3. WEBB - 22,867,946
4. PECOS - 19,216,133
5. PANOLA - 18,587,733
6. WISE - 18,291,462
7. DENTON - 17,635,098
8. FREESTONE - 15,038,594
9. NACOGDOCHES - 12,595,994
10. ZAPATA - 10,945,047

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