



CITY OF CLEARWATER

POST OFFICE BOX 4748, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33758-4748
CLEARWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT, 645 PIERCE STREET, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33756
TELEPHONE (727) 562-4242

POLICE DEPARTMENT

RELEASE # 10-077

May 11, 2010

Contact: Elizabeth Watts

Public Safety PIO

elizabeth.watts@myclearwater.com

(727) 562-4333

CLEARWATER POLICE WARN RESIDENTS ABOUT “CAR HOPPING”

Clearwater, Fla. – The Clearwater Police Department continues to receive multiple reports of vehicle burglaries across the city. Police are investigating three vehicle burglaries involving unlocked vehicles and one case of grand theft auto in which the owner left his vehicle unlocked with the keys in the center console. The vehicle was found abandoned last night.

There has been a 23% increase in vehicle burglaries from January – April in 2010 compared to the same time frame in 2009. In many of these cases, the vehicles were left unlocked. Unlocked vehicles are targeted through a practice called “car hopping.” When car hopping, suspect(s) check car door handles to see which vehicles are unlocked.

Car hopping can be fueled by different motives. “While it’s obvious some people steal items to make money, others do it for the thrill,” said Police Chief Anthony Holloway. Items commonly targeted in vehicle burglaries include GPS units, laptops, iPods, cell phones, cameras, other electronics and money. “It’s simple, if you don’t want it stolen, don’t leave valuables out in the open and lock your car doors,” Holloway said.

