

# Crime Prevention News

To Enhance The Safety of Faculty, Staff, and Students

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## Theft: What you can do to reduce your risks.

**From The Department Of Public Safety**

**By Officer Brad Allison**

Theft on a college campus is an every day occurrence, whether it is the thief that steals a backpack from someone or it

easiest thing you can do to safeguard your valuables, but sometimes it is overlooked. For instance there are numerous thefts from the "cubbyholes" that students put their backpacks in at the IMU Bookstore, yet there are lockers provided right around the corner that a student can use to lock their valuables. The same type of theft occurs at the Fieldhouse where people playing racquetball leave their belongings on the floor outside the court, but yet there is a locker just feet away. Another location for thefts is the Main Library, where unattended books, backpacks and lap top computers seem to magically "disappear"

is the employee that takes home a pencil or pen from work, it is still theft. In 1999 there were 341 reported thefts to the Department of Public Safety and in the year 2000, there were 286 reported thefts. Even though the statistics show a decline in reported thefts, there are still plenty of reasons to safeguard your personal belongings.

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*"Thefts occur on a daily basis"*

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Theft can be more than just the individual that is looking for an "easy target" to steal from. There are statistics that show that internal theft is one of the largest problems in the U.S. with a dollar amount of 40-200 billion dollars with a 42% increase shown in the year of 1997 to 1998.

The question is: what can students, faculty and staff do to decrease their chances of being "ripped off" from some preying thief? Following are some easy crime prevention measures that you can do to decrease your chances of becoming a victim of a theft.

The number one thing you can do is, of course, **lock up your belongings**. It is the

into thin air. Is this caused by David Copperfield or just possibly a thief waiting for an opportunity? My bet is on the latter.

Another prime location for thefts are offices or residence hall rooms that are left unlocked, even for "just a minute". **Always make sure that your office or room doors and windows are locked when you leave . Never leave your valuables out in the open, put them in a lockable desk drawer or filing cabinet for safe keeping.** Always be aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious people or activities to the Department of Public Safety by calling 335-5022 or in case of an emergency, dial 911.



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# Laptop Computer Theft



Laptops are becoming the computer of choice for professionals and students. And because they're small, easy to hide (and carry away), and have a high resale value, laptops are a primary target for thieves. Surveys from *Safeware Insurance* and the *Computer Security Institute* say that one in ten laptops sold this year will be stolen at an average of 1000 laptops stolen every day. Col-

leges are especially fertile territory for laptop thieves.

Lots of open doors, easy to distract students, lots of easy access areas: dorm rooms, libraries, Student Union. Suddenly a 85 page thesis has vanished, research files and homework are history, all in a blink of an eye. So, how can we deter these thefts? Here are ten simple plans of action you can follow to decrease your chances of becoming a thief's next victim.

1. Always use an anti-theft device. Portable locking devices and motion sensor alarms are fairly inexpensive and easy to use.
2. Never leave your laptop in open view in your car. Lock it in your trunk.
3. Never leave your laptop in open view in your room. Lock it in a desk or file cabinet.

## Reducing bicycle theft: lock it up.

There is bicycle theft occurring at the University of Iowa. Here's a few easy ways to reduce it:

**Register your bike** at the Parking Department located in the lower level of the I.M.U. Ramp. Protect your property by taking advantage of this service.

**Lock it.** Use a heavy duty lock and cable or a u-bolt style lock.

**Secure your bike** by locking it to a bike rack, making sure to secure the frame as well as both tires and wheels.

**Remove all accessories** when parked.



4. Save a copy of your purchase receipt. Copy the serial number and description of your laptop and put these documents in a safe place (lock box or safety deposit box). Register the laptop with the Department of Public Safety and the *Project ID* registration system by contacting Officer Brad Allison at 335-5043.

5. Engrave your name or other information that identifies the computer as yours somewhere on the laptop. Do not use your social security number.

6. Carry your laptop in an unassuming, well-padded bag. This avoids the unwanted attention a traditional laptop computer bag or a fancy leather briefcase can generate.

7. Never leave your laptop unattended in a public place, including your office. Secure it in your desk at all times, or lock it in a drawer, even if you leave for a moment.

8. Never put your laptop on the airport security x-ray machine belt before you have a clear path to the end of the belt.

9. Students should always lock their laptops. The numerous, easy access open areas on campus: dorms, libraries, student unions, etc. often lead to crimes of opportunity.

10. Back up all irreplaceable information daily.

For more information on different levels of anti-theft devices for your laptop you can log on to: [www.kryptonitelock.com](http://www.kryptonitelock.com) or [www.secure-it.com](http://www.secure-it.com)

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*"One in Ten  
laptop computers  
sold this year will  
be stolen"*

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## Please wear your seatbelt when you drive.

It is a nationally proven statistic that **seatbelts save lives.** The Department of Public Safety would like to remind you to please wear your seatbelt when you drive. The driver and front seat occupants of a registered motor vehicle in Iowa ( except motorcycle or motorized bicycle) shall each wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt. Iowa Code: 321.445. **We encourage all Faculty, Staff, and Students to wear their seatbelts. Please drive safe.**