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## **Ford F-Series trucks now most stolen vehicles in B.C.**

**ICBC, police respond with immobilizer offer, more bait cars**

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ICBC, the provincial government, and the Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime Team (IMPACT) have announced new approaches to reduce the theft of Ford F-Series trucks – now the most stolen vehicles in B.C.

While the theft rate for most vehicles has declined significantly over the last year, Ford F-Series trucks haven't done as well. Thieves often target these vehicles because many are not immobilized. ICBC, the provincial government and IMPACT want to ensure drivers of these vehicles are using immobilizers to protect against auto theft.

"We have made great strides in reducing auto theft over the past five years in B.C.," said Solicitor General John van Dongen. "By specifically targeting the most stolen vehicle in B.C., we believe we can build on our successes and further reduce vehicle theft and enhance public safety."

In 2007, Ford F-series trucks were the fourth most stolen vehicles in B.C. Now that they are in the number one spot, ICBC has launched a pilot project in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley to offer owners of non-immobilized 2000 to 2006 Ford F-Series trucks a free electronic immobilizer, up to a value of \$160 including installation and tax. Letters will be mailed out this month to 2,200 owners of F-150s, F-250s and F-350s. Those receiving the offer will have until December 6, 2008, to book their installation at a participating retailer.

"Immobilizers are the best protection against auto theft and we are optimistic that this pilot project, along with the bait car program and other strategies, will help continue the downward trend in theft," says Nicolas Jimenez, ICBC's Road Safety director. "The average repair cost for a stolen Ford F-Series truck is more than twice that of the average stolen vehicle in B.C. By reducing thefts and claims costs, we can keep providing customers with low and stable rates."

As part of this initiative, IMPACT is also increasing the number of Ford F-Series trucks in their bait car fleet. "We're taking action to further bring down auto theft," says Sgt. Gord Elias of IMPACT. "The theft of Ford pick-ups often leads to significant public safety issues – thieves target these powerful trucks because they know how to steal them and often use them to commit other serious crimes. Now we are expanding the net and are targeting the thieves that steal these vehicles."

The bait car program and other auto crime prevention programs and tools have been very effective in reducing auto crime. When comparing statistics in the first six months of 2008 to the same period in 2007, auto theft has dropped by 16 per cent in B.C. and 19

percent in the Lower Mainland. In the first six months of this year compared to the same period in 2003 – the year IMPACT’s bait car program first started – auto theft has dropped by 45 per cent in B.C. and by 54 per cent in the Lower Mainland.

For more information on anti-theft devices and optional insurance discounts, visit [icbc.com](http://icbc.com).

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