



For Immediate Release

Office of Superintendent of Insurance Enforcement Division Targets Auto Crime
Heightened Patrols and GPS Trackers Deployed During Balloon Fiesta
National Insurance Fraud Summit Comes to Albuquerque

Santa Fe, NM — With the rising number of auto thefts and burglaries, which can lead to higher auto insurance rates, the Insurance Fraud Bureau within the Office of Superintendent of Insurance (OSI) is implementing innovative tactics to combat the growing problem. Along with forming an Auto Theft Task Force, OSI's Insurance Fraud Bureau continues working with many other departments in New Mexico, finding new ways to support the efforts of law enforcement.

In an attempt to reduce the number of vehicles stolen during this year's events, OSI and the Albuquerque Police Department (APD), along with assistance from the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department, Rio Rancho Police Department, and the New Mexico State Police, joined forces to keep the reputation of Albuquerque and the Balloon Fiesta experience a positive one in 2016. In addition to last year's increased security measures from APD, the Insurance Fraud Bureau provided officers and GPS tracking devices, working with balloonists to embed the devices into their equipment and trailers.

"With our Insurance Fraud Bureau's tracking devices and the entire task force providing 24-7 surveillance with uniformed and undercover detectives, we were able to keep up the momentum of reducing auto thefts and help visitors and balloonists alike enjoy the Balloon Fiesta and return to our beautiful state each year," Superintendent John G. Franchini remarked.

Additionally, on Wednesday, October 12, 2016, the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) and OSI will be hosting a vehicle crime and insurance fraud summit. Although not open to the public, attendees include law enforcement from across the nation and New Mexico, elected officials, regulators, and insurance special investigative units coming together for an all-day summit to hear from top insurance and law enforcement officials. Topics will include the current state of affairs in New Mexico regarding medical fraud, vehicle crime, property fraud, as well as legislative issues, with training and resources provided to attendees.

"OSI is proud to be hosting the NICB summit in New Mexico, and looks forward to continuing joint operations to combat crime and to educate and protect consumers," Superintendent Franchini said.

You can help reduce the likelihood of your vehicle becoming a target of theft or burglary by taking some simple precautions.

- Roll up windows, lock the doors, and remove your keys
- Remove ALL personal items from view
- Never leave your vehicle running unattended
- Park in well-lit areas or in a garage when possible
- Consider installing a theft deterrent device such as a kill switch, steering wheel collar, or brake locks

Thieves often look for open opportunities and the path of least resistance, don't make it easy. With a little precaution from residents and visitors combined with the increased operations from OSI's Insurance Fraud Bureau and the Auto Theft Task Force, we can all work to combat crime in New Mexico.

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*The **Office of Superintendent of Insurance Enforcement Division's** mission is to investigate criminal and regulatory violations under the NM Insurance Code with the Insurance Fraud Bureau being tasked with detecting, reducing, investigating, and prosecuting violations. Insurance Fraud Bureau officers are sworn members of law enforcement working to protect consumers in New Mexico by participating in joint operations and identifying trends in insurance fraud. www.osi.state.nm.us*

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