



## CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Chief Jeffrey M. Hadley

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### ***NEWS RELEASE***

**For Immediate Release**

**November 19, 2020**

### **Chatham County Police Department Issues Warning Ahead of Holidays: Lock Your Vehicle**

**Chatham County, GA (November 19, 2020)** – The Chatham County Police Department is issuing a warning to citizens and their guests to always lock their vehicles as we head into the holiday season.

The warning comes after the Chatham County Police Department saw a significant spike in entering autos between the week of Thanksgiving 2019 and New Year's Day 2020. Eighty-nine autos were entered during that five week time period, accounting for 19 percent of that category of crime for all of 2019. It is not unusual for crimes like this to increase during the holidays, but that doesn't mean citizens shouldn't do what they can to keep from becoming a victim.

“This is one holiday tradition we want to end,” said Chatham County Police Chief Jeff Hadley. “Well over 90 percent of our entering autos occur when a vehicle is left unlocked. This is a crime that you can prevent simply by locking your car door. Nothing could be easier.”

Hadley encourages anyone having guests over to make sure the guests also lock their cars, regardless of where you live or the time of day. Make sure all valuables are locked out of sight in your trunk and, whenever possible, take those valuables inside. And, never leave a firearm in an unlocked vehicle.

“Last year on Thanksgiving Day, our officers responded to six vehicles that were entered and had valuables stolen before 6 p.m.,” Hadley recalled. “This year when we see a citizen on Thanksgiving, we want our conversation to be about how their holiday is going – not about what items were stolen from their car.”

***Coverage Note: Chief Hadley is making his bi-monthly presentation to Chatham County Commission on Friday, November 20, 2020, and will be available for interviews at the County Administration Building (located at 124 Bull Street) after the presentation. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.***

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