



# Crime Prevention Tip

ARAPAHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
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Crime  
Prevention  
Section

## Laptop Theft Prevention and Safety

Laptops are increasing in popularity for both business and personal use. They are extremely convenient to use and to carry. Ten years ago when travelers were victimized the object of theft was cameras; five years ago it was camcorders, today its laptops. Criminals look at laptops as a good return on their “investment”. A good laptop can be worth up to \$5,000 dollars. A criminal can sell a stolen laptop to an unsuspecting used computer store or pawnshop and easily receive up to half its value in cash. Not too bad when you compare that to the amount of cash a thief would get by targeting your wallet. How much money would they get from you, \$60.00? It is easy to understand why your laptop is so desirable to a thief. In addition to the obvious monetary benefit, there is also a legal benefit to stealing property vs. someone’s money. As a result, laptops are worth more than cash, and if you are caught stealing them, often times, the penalty is less severe.

### Crime Prevention and Security Tips

- Record the make, model and serial number of the laptop and any peripheral attached devices and keep the numbers at both a secured location and in a wallet or purse.
- Return the completed warranty card to the manufacturer. This may help “flag it” if a thief ever sends it in for maintenance.
- Back-up files in your laptop on a regular basis or download critical files to your desktop computer or server.
- If privately owned, make sure the laptop is covered by the homeowner’s insurance policy. Never leave a laptop visible in an unattended motor vehicle.
- Carry a laptop in a nondescript carrying case, briefcase or bag when traveling. Placing it in a case specifically designed for computers makes it an obvious target for thieves.
- When traveling by taxi, shuttle bus or public transportation, keep your laptop with you at all times.
- Don’t store your password with your laptop.
- Don’t store your laptop in checked luggage if you travel with it.

If your laptop is stolen, report it immediately to your local law enforcement agency. If your laptop contained personal information that might be used by an identity thief, visit [ftc.gov/idtheft](http://ftc.gov/idtheft) for more information on what steps you should take.

If you have any questions about laptop safety or other crime prevention issues, call Deputy Amir Stephen at (720) 874-3752 or e-mail at [astepehn@co.arapahoe.co.us](mailto:astepehn@co.arapahoe.co.us)