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Residents on Alert as Car Break-Ins Spread Across Delaware County Neighborhoods

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Authorities in Delaware County, Ohio, are investigating a recent wave of car break-ins that has left residents concerned and law enforcement ramping up patrols. The incidents, which have spread across multiple townships and cities, appear to share a pattern and may be the work of the same group of criminals.

The latest report comes from Genoa Township, where a woman named Lisa described waking up to find her vehicle had been disturbed overnight. “It had been ransacked in the

front seat of the car; everything in my console was in the front seat,” she told WSYX ABC 6. Small amounts of money and loose change were stolen from the unlocked vehicle.

“Unfortunately, I didn’t have my car door locked,” Lisa admitted. “I still think even if I didn’t have it locked, people don’t have the right to really go into your car and violate your property.”

Police say thieves are targeting vehicles that are left unlocked and, in some cases, entering open garages to gain access to more property. Lt. Rich Lyon of the Genoa Township Police Department confirmed that officers are seeing a sharp increase in these types of crimes. “It’s been very sporadic, different locations,” Lyon explained. “Most of them happening in the early morning hours or overnight.”

These incidents are not limited to Genoa Township. Similar break-ins have been reported in nearby areas, including Sunbury, Powell, and even parts of Columbus near the Polaris shopping district. Local law enforcement agencies are now sharing information and working together to identify suspects and determine if the cases are connected.

Lt. Lyon detailed how the thieves operate, describing a method of going from house to house during the night and checking car doors for any that are unlocked. “They are going around and jiggling handles, and when they find that handle open, they are rifling through to take what they can,” he said.

County residents are urged to lock their cars, close garage doors, and secure valuables to help deter these crimes. Although the stolen items may seem small loose change, wallets, or electronics, officials warn that the trend reflects a larger concern about property security and opportunistic crime.

Lisa, who lives in the Highland Lakes neighborhood, expressed hope that those responsible will be caught soon. “I would love that, I would love for them to be caught,” she said.

Law enforcement is encouraging anyone with security footage or information to come forward to assist with the investigation. In the meantime, the message from police is simple: stay alert and don’t make it easy for criminals.