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Washington State Patrol Statement on Recent Carjackings

The Washington State Patrol will be increasing its visible presence on I-5 in response to a series of recent carjackings and advises the public to be aware of this unique and dangerous criminal behavior.

Federal Way, Washington - In the early morning hours of Sunday, September 15th, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) received a report of an armed carjacking on the southbound lanes of I-5 near the South 320th exit. It was reported that the victim's vehicle was bumped from behind by a white SUV and both vehicles pulled to the shoulder. Three suspects wearing ski masks exited the suspect vehicle and pointed guns at the victims. The three suspects stole the victim's phone and wallet and threw them into the bushes. The suspects then stole the victim's vehicle at gunpoint and fled the scene. All three suspects were identified as being black and young, perhaps teenaged.

Two similar incidents occurred this morning (Tuesday, September 17, 2024).

- Shortly after midnight, a white SUV bumped a vehicle near Fife. After pulling over to the shoulder, 6-7 black males wearing ski masks approached the victim. The victim was punched, and his car was stolen. The victim was able to track the stolen vehicle on his phone after the suspects tossed the phone from the vehicle. The vehicle was then located in Federal Way and pursued to Martin Luther King Blvd. One male suspect was arrested, and two females were released to family members.
- Shortly after 1:00 a.m., another car was bumped by a white SUV. Much like before, the victims were robbed at gunpoint. Later, one of the victim's credit cards was attempted to be used at a McDonalds on south 320th. The manager of the restaurant was able to provide a vehicle description that matched one of the earlier stolen vehicles.

The Washington State Patrol is asking anyone who may have witnessed or have information about these incidents to contact us immediately. Please contact Detective Sergeant Stacy Moate at 425-401-7745 or email her at stacy.moate@wsp.wa.gov. Individuals with information may also contact Crime Stoppers at <https://crimestoppers.com/>.

Carjackings in our area are extremely rare but they do sometimes occur. While the vast majority of minor collisions are simple fender-benders caused by an inattentive driver, the traveling public needs to be aware and wary of any similar scenario where they are bumped by another vehicle and then multiple or masked people emerge from the causing vehicle. We recommend that anyone involved in a minor collision involving a white SUV, immediately report it to 911. Move out of traffic flow to a safe location but do not pin yourself in. Given recent events, be vigilant on who and how many persons get out from the causing vehicle. If the situation seems at all suspicious, be prepared to quickly leave the area and not engage with individuals from the causing vehicle. Drive to a well-lit and safe public place like a local police station. If you find yourself in this scenario, call 911 with updates as you are safely able to do so.

While a white SUV is linked to each of the three situations outlined above, this type of crime could be perpetrated by any vehicle. Any similarly suspicious behavior with any vehicle or number or description of suspicious parties should be treated with great caution. If the situation turns out to be a common and innocent minor collision, law enforcement will be able to sort things out quickly and both parties will be on their way after the normal exchange of information.

The Washington State Patrol and our partners in local law enforcement are committed to finding the perpetrators of this serious and dangerous criminal behavior and bringing them to justice. The public's awareness, reasoned caution, and fast information sharing will help us in this important work.

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