

# Sheriff



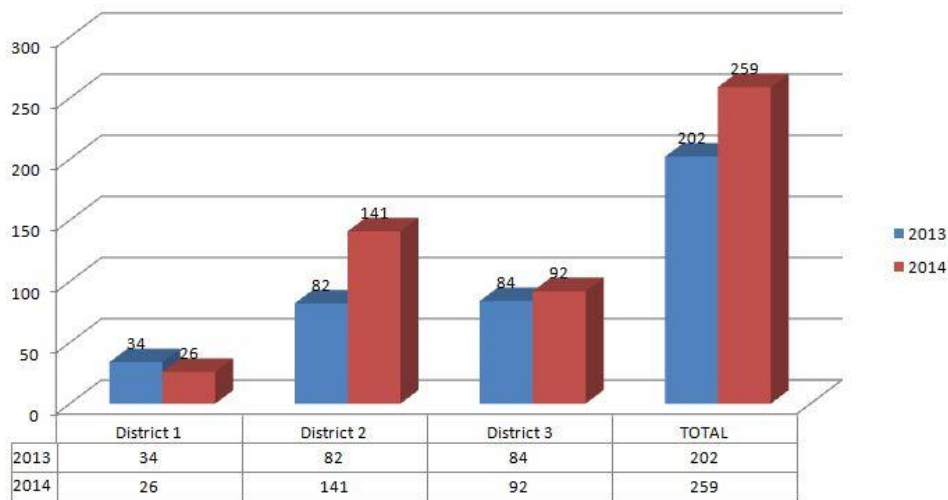
**Larry Ashley, Okaloosa County Sheriff**

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August 4, 2014

## OCSO SAYS CAR BURGLARIES AND STOLEN FIREARMS CAUSE FOR CONCERN

**Vehicle Burglaries  
April - July  
2013 & 2014**



Car burglaries are up 28% the second quarter of 2014 in Okaloosa County over the same timeframe last year, and more than two-dozen firearms have been stolen during those crimes.

In an estimated 85 percent of the total car break-ins during the three month period from April to July, the thieves simply opened an unlocked door and helped themselves to what was inside.

The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is asking residents and tourists alike to take three simple steps that can help you keep these stolen guns off the street, protect your property, and also protect you from the crime of identity theft that can result if your identification and credit cards are stolen:

**Lock Your Car, Take Your Keys, Hide or Remove your Belongings!**

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The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate"

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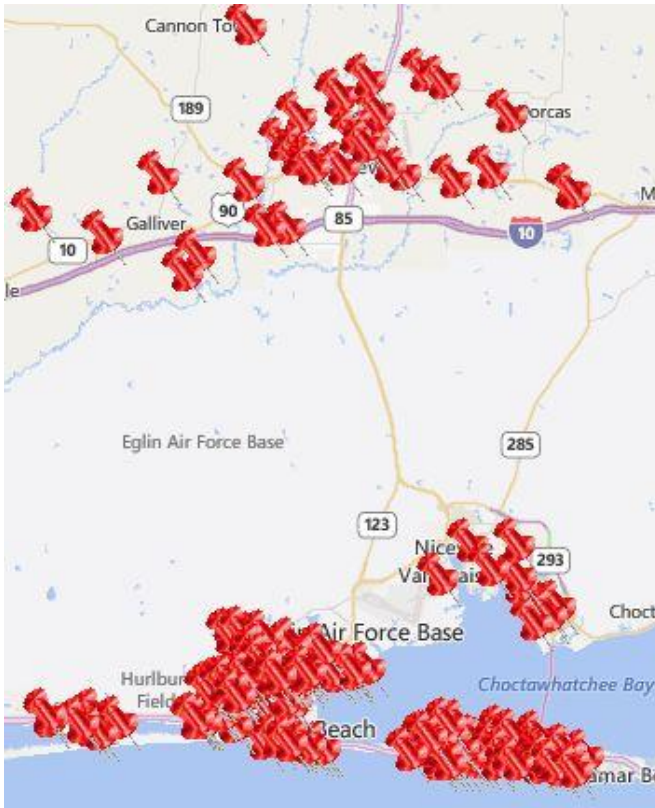
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The biggest increase in car burglaries the second quarter took place in District Two, which encompasses the Fort Walton Beach, Mary Esther, and Shalimar areas – jumping 72%. That is also where the majority of the 25 guns were stolen. None of the weapons has been recovered at this time.

To further illustrate the issue, the pins on the chart below indicate car burglaries reported to the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office so far this year. Again, many of these burglaries could be prevented by simply locking your car, taking your keys, and hiding or removing your belongings.



To raise awareness about crime prevention, please join us and other local organizations for National Night Out which takes place August 5<sup>th</sup> from five to seven p.m. at the Destin Community Center.

Target will be offering free hot dogs, chips, and drinks at the event.

OCSO Crime Prevention, Emerald Coast Crime Stoppers, and other groups will be on-hand to help promote working together to create safe communities.



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