**When You and I go shopping, we better have our running shoes on and eyes opened for burglars crashing into any location where they are going to crash and grab.**

**Good luck, especially for those of us (including me) who are slow moving Seniors.**

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**SOURCE:**

**More Burglars Crash Vehicles Into Stores**



**Jim Carlton, *The Wall Street Journal* | Page A006, 20 November 2023**

OAKLAND, Calif.—A new crime trend is crashing, quite literally, into American retailers.

Burglars are using stolen vehicles to barge through storefronts and then loot ATMs, guns and other valuables inside.

Known as “ram raiding,” the tactic is creating fresh headaches for retailers, who have already been under siege from organized retail-theft rings in many parts of the country.

The battering rams of choice are often stolen Hyundais and Kias, officials from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said. Those cars have become targets of criminals nationwide because they lack certain antitheft technology and are relatively easy to steal, police have said.

The attacks have been most concentrated on the West Coast. In an unusually brazen attack in Oakland, thieves on Nov. 6 used a backhoe to crash into an ampm convenience store and yank out the ATM with chains. Store officials declined to comment. Police say they are looking for suspects.

At the Beauty Supply Ware-house across the street, supervisor Luis Montoya said the establishment has been hit with seven attempted drive-through burglaries in the past two months—despite being encircled with steel posts and having four metal security doors. Burglars haven’t managed to break in yet, although Montoya says the store’s doors have been damaged by efforts to yank them open with chains.

“I’ve lived here 26 years and never seen it as bad as this,” Montoya said.

Statistics aren’t compiled for ram-raiding cases, but local and federal law-enforcement officials say they have seen a sharp uptick since the Covid-19 pandemic amid an overall rise in property crime.

“This is something ATF is watching nationwide,” said John Ham, an ATF spokesman in Kansas City, Mo. “It’s in the news more because it’s happening more.”

Nonresidential burglaries jumped 11.7% between 2019 and 2022, while motor-vehicle thefts soared 67.5% over that time, according to an analysis of federal crime data in major cities by the Council on Criminal Justice, a think tank.

The surge in motor-vehicle thefts has been propelled, in part, by more Hyundais and Kias being stolen after social-media challenges were issued last year. Police have said those vehicles typically are used for joy riding or committing other crimes.

While this type of break-in has been around for decades, criminals are increasingly driving into storefronts, rather than the more standard practice of hooking chains onto vehicles to pull out a specific item of value, like a safe, said James Dudley, former San Francisco deputy police chief. “They’re figuring that if they break through the front doors, they can get away with whatever is of value inside before police can respond,” said Dudley, a lecturer in criminal justice studies at San Francisco State University.

That is what happened on Sept. 3 of last year, in Wright City, Mo., when thieves plowed a stolen Hyundai Elantra into Osage County Guns shortly before 2 a.m. and spent less than two minutes clearing out 35 firearms, said general manager John Dawson.

The cost in damages and lost business totaled $200,000, plus an additional $30,000 in stolen guns, said Dawson, though insurance covered the losses. To prevent a recurrence after a five-week closure, the store placed three 4,000-pound blocks at the front entrance.

More businesses are trying to protect themselves, such as by having bollards installed out front. Filled with steel and anchored in the ground, they cost anywhere from $600 to $10,000 each, with the highest-price ones rated to withstand a full impact from a vehicle.