

Your tax disc is at risk

But a £1 holder can help you beat the thieves

By RON LIVINGSTONE

A CAMPAIGN to rid Teesside of the latest scourge in car crime has been launched with backing from the Evening Gazette.

Thieves now being beaten by hi-tech alarms and immobilisers, built-in stereos and coded radios are turning to easier pickings - your tax disc.

In seconds, a thief can smash a passenger window, reach in and peel off your tax disc, possibly worth up to £160.

And up to 90 are stolen each month on Teesside.

Discs are sold on the black market for around £30 for a 12-month disc, or are doctored to lift the written details off and then fraudulently filled in.

In the words of Cleveland Police crime prevention officer Gerry McBride: "To the thief, your car is just a glass showcase on wheels and tax discs are easy pickings."

The problem is that legally you must display a valid tax disc.

So what can you do? The answer is simple - and cheap - the secure tax disc holder, costing just £1.

It works in such a way that anyone ripping it from the

screen renders the disc worthless.

Mr McBride said: "Because the tax disc sticks to the adhesive holder and the holder sticks to the windscreen, if the disc is pulled off the windscreen it rips the disc completely - making it useless to the thief."

The holder initiative is backed by the DVLA, Cleveland Police and community safety and crime prevention body Safe in Tees Valley.

Mr McBride said: "The discs take seconds to steal and are sold on for about £30 after being cleaned up."

"Despite the relatively low returns for thieves, the cost of the crime is considerable for the motorists, who have to repair smashed windows and replace the discs. The DVLA and Post Office need to process claims for replacement discs and the Exchequer loses millions in revenue."

The only downside to the disc holder is you have to replace it every time you tax your car - but at £1 it is a small price to pay for peace of mind.

You can get your secure tax disc holder by filling in the coupon and ordering one by post, or you can buy it at Gazette branch offices.



BEWARE: Tax discs make easy pickings for thieves, but a tamper-proof disc holder has been launched and is available from Evening Gazette offices

Picture: PETER REIMANN

CLEVELAND POLICE

TAMPER-PROOF TAX DISC OFFER

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

Please enclose an SAE of 4.5ins x 6ins with your order. Thank you.

Please forward: _____ Tax Disc Holders @ £1 each Total = £ _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order for the total of £ _____ made payable to Safe in Tees Valley.

Send your order to: Safe in Tees Valley, Tax Disc Offer, Christine House, Sorbonne Close, Thornaby, Stockton On Tees. TS17 6DA

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Safe in Tees Valley

CLEVELAND POLICE

Secure-i-Disc Patent No 2 298 620

This was the promotion that appeared in the Teesside Evening Gazette. On Tuesday 15th October. The circulation of this newspaper is approximately 65,000 and resulted in 12,000 Secur-i-Discs being sold, a staggering 20% of the approximate circulation.