

Wheels: An e-mail from Ron asks, “Jim, I am getting asked this question big time today. The story goes that while on vacation, someone parked their car in a highway rest area, got out, locked their car via their car’s key fob and came back to find everything missing from the car. When they called the local police department, they were told, YES, thieves are breaking into your car using a code grabber. So don’t lock your car that way.

I think this may have been true in the early days of the radio frequency key or remote keyless entry (RKE) fobs, but the newer car fobs stop this. Can you shed some light on this matter? I find it hard to think someone would not notice someone stealing items from their own car at rest stops.”

Halderman: Good question. Older key fobs could have the frequency recorded and used to get into the vehicle by someone using a frequency recorder. However, most vehicles today, along with garage door openers, use a rolling code. This means that the frequency changes each time it is used and the key fob and the receiver are linked. If they grab the frequency, it is changed the very next time it is used and therefore cannot be used to gain entry into your vehicle.

