

# Cargo thefts expected to spike Memorial Day weekend



- Cargo theft regularly spikes in the U.S. over Memorial Day weekend, [particularly in trucking](#), with incidents occurring up to 43% more frequently over that time period, according to an analysis by [SensiTech](#), a supply chain security and intelligence firm.
- The uptick in theft has to do with the increased number of shipments that can be left inadequately secured or unattended for longer periods of time over the holiday. Insurance Services Office (ISO) and the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), reported that in 2019 there had been 126 reported thefts over Memorial Day weekend with a combined value of approximately \$20.36 million.
- Experts recommend a variety of technical and personnel best practices to ward off theft, including the use of GPS tracking on cargo, not leaving trucks unattended or unlocked, and verifying the authenticity of all shipments and the personnel assigned to transport them.

Cargo and even full-truck theft is common over Memorial Day weekend because, "it's a standalone holiday and people are ordering summer supplies and preparing for their 4th of July vacations," CargoNet Vice President of Operations Keith Lewis told Supply Chain Dive. "All these loads are being moved while the whole country is pretty much shut down and...a lot of factories and automotive plants [also tend to] shut down around this time."

For that reason, Lewis says a lot of trucks end up parked in unsecured parking areas like drivers' homes and shopping mall parking lots where they become vulnerable.

Theft tactics have changed over the years as shipping modes and security have gotten more sophisticated, however trucks remain the most vulnerable targets and are frequently broken into or stolen at warehouses and parking lots. According to [Trucks.com](#), "strategic theft" is becoming more frequent — where thieves use technological tools to access protected shipment data and fabricate documents and even employee identities that allow them to pick up the cargo and take off with it before anyone is the wiser.

However, theft of whole cargo shipments "the old fashioned way" is still the most common problem shippers face. CargoNet's analysis of thefts in the first quarter of 2019 found that out of 330 recorded theft incidents, [52% involved a stolen vehicle](#).

This overall decrease is good news for shippers as cargo theft, while especially problematic over Memorial Day, is a year-round problem. Three day weekends give would-be thieves extra time to carry out a heist, but Fridays and Saturdays, in general, are popular target dates — holiday or not.

Experts recommend common sense security practices as the best safeguard against theft. These measures include well-established lines of communication between shippers, fleet managers and drivers, ensuring driver breaks are pre-scheduled and take place in well-lit, secured rest areas, and insuring drop lots, truck stops and parking areas are secured. You do not have to have the closest parking spot. Protect your equipment from parking damages as well as securing your equipment with line of site and lighting at all times.