

LOCAL NEWS

Thieves jammed surveillance cameras to steal watercraft from driveway, Long Island man says

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By Carolyn Gusoff
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A Long Island man believes thieves jammed his home surveillance cameras to steal his personal watercraft right out of his driveway Wednesday.

There's been a string of watercraft thefts over the last year on Long Island. Four of them were towed away by a U-Haul truck in the middle of the night.

"It went from catalytic converters to Jet Skis, I guess," theft victim Chris Montalbano said.

"They knew what they were doing"

Montalbano was looking forward to boating season, but when he got home Wednesday, his \$25,000 Sea-Doo FishPro 170 watercraft was gone from his Amityville driveway.

Surveillance camera recordings added to the mystery; three minutes of footage also disappeared.

"You see the Jet Ski for one second, and then all of a sudden, it skips for, like, three minutes and there's nothing. And the Jet Ski is gone, but you don't know how it left," Montalbano said.

Only one camera farthest from the driveway recorded the midday theft. A hooded, masked person in a Dodge Durango is seen hooking up the trailer to a hitch and driving away with the watercraft.

"They had to have been staking it out and known. Because you don't just pull up like that. They knew what they were doing," Montalbano said.

Montalbano feels the only explanation for the missing footage is that his cameras were jammed.

"It's the only thing I can think of," he said.

How to prevent thieves from jamming surveillance systems

Cyber security expert Michael Graziano says thieves can now jam Wi-Fi signals to disrupt surveillance video recordings.

"The camera may be working, but because since it loses connection with the internet, there's no recording that goes to the cloud," Graziano said.

The devices are illegal, but Graziano said it's possible to make them at home.

There is one way around the troubling new trend.

"Any camera system that you have, hardline it," Graziano said. "A hardline cable that goes right to the internet, so that would stop someone from jamming it."

As for the string of watercraft thefts, if you keep your watercraft in the driveway, block it in to make it harder to steal. Montalbano plans to lock up any future trailers.

Carolyn Gusoff



Carolyn Gusoff has covered some of the most high profile news stories in the New York City area and is best known as a trusted, tenacious, consistent and caring voice of Long Island's concerns.

