

**By Diane Stamm and
Sheri Hink-Wagner
The Wauneta Breeze**

The Chase County Sheriff's Department is looking into an attempted break-in at Wauneta Crossroads on the early morning hours of Wednesday, Feb. 19.

Deputy Dave Ridlen reported the storage shed of the car wash bay at Wauneta Crossroads was broken into just after 2 a.m. based on surveillance video. Authorities believe an unknown person or people broke into the shed trying to get money out of the coin mechanisms, but gave up. Items of value were left behind.

Wauneta Crossroads manager Angie West said their surveillance video showed a vehicle make a loop around the vacuums in front of the car wash and park in the car wash at 2:18 a.m. She said the vehicle sat in the car wash for approximately 10 minutes when it then drove another loop around the vacuums and parked beside the car wash door, where it remained for approximately an hour.

West told Breeze staff the individual got the lock off the storage shed and did damage to the door, but was unable to open the storage shed. She said nothing was taken during the incident.

West added that while the individual was at the car wash for just over an hour he/she never used the interior lights of his/her vehicle but did use a flashlight. West said the individual reentered his/her vehicle, backed out of the car wash at 3:36 a.m. and drove onto Arikaree Avenue to the stop sign at Highway 6 where the vehicle turned west.

The incident at Wauneta Crossroads is still under investigation and the Sheriff's Department asks that the public report any suspicious activity. West added she was told by the Chase County Sheriff's office that the description she gave of the individual alerted law enforcement officers to a similar incident in Atwood, Kan., which they felt may be related to the Wauneta Crossroads incident.

According to Deputy Mike Dukes, the Chase County Sheriff's Department is working with other law enforcement agencies, including the Nebraska State Patrol, pursuing leads as similar crimes have been reported.