

**For release after May 26**

## County tax assessor-collector helps fight title fraud in Texas, county residents can use Title Check to protect themselves

(YOUR COUNTY) is assisting the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to stop title fraud in Texas, and county residents can help by learning how to protect themselves before they buy a used vehicle.

“Everyone who applies for a title in our office will have the vehicle information run through the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System,” said (YOUR NAME), the (YOUR COUNTY) tax assessor-collector.

This system is similar to how law enforcement agencies consolidated their information into the national crime database. The title database contains title records from DMVs across the nation, and the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) is using it to thwart would-be title washers from getting clean titles on vehicles that should be branded salvage, rebuilt or flooded.

“People who used to find ways to scam the system by putting a clean Texas title on flooded, rebuilt and salvage vehicles may be surprised to find that’s not going to be so easy in the Lone Star State anymore,” (Your last name) said.

That doesn’t mean you won’t buy one of these vehicles. “The vehicle seller can sign over to you what might look like a good title and later, the TxDMV notifies you that truck, car, motorcycle or motorhome you bought is really salvage, rebuilt, or unsafe to drive,” (Your last name) said. “You can avoid having this happen to you by going to Title Check on [www.TxDMV.gov](http://www.TxDMV.gov) website to connect to the national database.”

Unlike the crime database, which is only available to law enforcement, the national title database is available to consumers. There is a small fee for accessing the title database.

The U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for the title database. The Justice Department partners with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators to oversee the system, which gives you a choice of several private companies from which to purchase a title history report.

“You need a few bucks, credit card and the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) to find out if the used vehicle you plan to purchase has any title issues,” (Your Last Name) said. “And you can use it on any vehicle from any state so you can go to Title Check for vehicles you might see on Internet auction sites or in classified ads.”

A title history report shows where and what states the vehicle was titled in, previous odometer readings and whether it has a brand that could impact the vehicle’s safety and/or value, such as salvage, junk, rebuilt or flooded.

TxDmv Executive Director Whitney Brewster noted licensed businesses that specialize in selling salvage and rebuilt vehicles tell consumers the condition of the vehicle up front. Title fraud happens when a

dishonest seller preys on innocent buyers, convincing them to buy vehicles without disclosing the title issues.

"Don't let it happen to you or any of your family or friends," (Your Last Name) said. "Especially not when a click of the mouse can take you to Title Check on the TxDMV website.

"If you don't remember anything else when buying a used vehicle, please remember this: Don't Buy a Wreck. Do a Title Check." (Your Last Name) said.

**For more information:**

Title Check, [www.TxDMV.gov](http://www.TxDMV.gov)

Title Check video, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe5zILz\\_DKc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fe5zILz_DKc)

National Motor Vehicle Title Information System, [www.vehiclehistory.gov](http://www.vehiclehistory.gov)