



Catalytic Converter Thefts

How to reduce your chances of victimization

Catalytic converters thefts are on the rise as inflation increases for precious metals. Catalytic converters are anti-pollution devices that are a part of the exhaust system underneath the vehicle. Within minutes, a thief can steal the converter and then sell it to scrap metal yards for profit. Catalytic converter replacement costs can vary from several hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars. Higher standing vehicles, like SUVs and trucks, tend to be easier targets but thieves do not discriminate.

You can tell if your converter was stolen if you hear a roaring noise with sputtering sounds when starting the vehicle, experience a bumpy ride while driving, smell toxic fumes around the vehicle, and see a large hole and cut pipes underneath the vehicle.

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1. **Install anti-theft devices on your catalytic converter**, such as a stainless-steel cable locking device that is welded to the car's frame, a steel shield, or rebar cages. Although it is still possible for a thief to steal the converter, they are more likely to be deterred and seek out easier targets.
 2. **Enhance the sensitivity if your car alarm** through the settings so that it can easily detect when a thief jacks up your car to extract the device.
 3. **Park in an enclosed parking garage or at least in an area that is well lit with motion sensor lighting and surveillance cameras.** Thieves want to operate undetected where there is little surveillance and may be deterred otherwise. Ensure you park close to public entrances and regularly move your vehicle.
 4. **Etch your license plate or VIN number into the converter and paint it in a unique color**, like bright red or orange. If the catalytic converter is stolen, police will have an easier time tracking it down and scrap yards may decline to purchase it.
 5. **Call a reputable local muffler shop or your police department and ask what cars have been targeted in your area.** For example, Sacramento, California has reported that Toyota Prius vehicle owners are the most victimized customers thus far because the devices in their hybrid vehicles offer a larger amount of precious metals.
 6. **Ensure your car insurance policy has full coverage, comprehensive car insurance** that covers catalytic converter theft as opposed to just liability coverage only.

For more information, contact your LVMPD Enterprise Area Command's Crime Prevention Specialist, Bella Yourgules-Scholes, at 702-828-5804 or B7845Y@lvmpd.com