

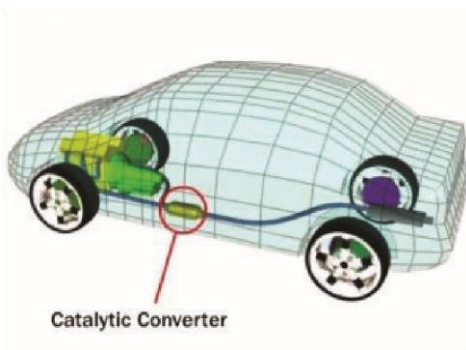
# Catalytic Converter Theft



Catalytic converters are added to vehicles as an emission control device to remove pollutants from the exhaust. Converters turn harmful compounds into clean exhaust using precious metals housed in a muffler-like package attached to the exhaust pipe. The catalyst helps convert carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides into carbon dioxide, oxygen, nitrogen and water.

## Why are catalytic converters stolen?

Converters use many different precious metals (like Platinum, Palladium and Rhodium) in the catalyst process. When disassembled, the metals inside are extremely valuable and provide a high reward versus the risk thieves take to steal them. Unfortunately, victims may pay at least \$2,000 in repairs.



Converters are fairly simple to remove with any metal cutting instrument. Thieves can use battery powered cutting tools to quickly cut both ends and remove the converter. However, with a little more work, hand-held cutting tools reduce noise while cutting and lessen the chance of getting caught.



## Targeted vehicles

Vehicles are usually targeted when they have some type of converter installed. Trends vary but the Toyota Prius and Ford E-250/F-250 (and larger with V10 Triton engines) are popular vehicles. In the past, it was Toyota 4-Runners as they are easier to get under.

## Theft prevention techniques

Vehicles are targeted everywhere and at all hours of the day - theft is hard to stop! Prevention may cost several hundred dollars, but replacement costs several thousand and can take weeks to fix!

- ◇ Mark your converter with VIN # so it can be traced if located
- ◇ Install an undercarriage shield or cage
- ◇ Local exhaust/muffler shops may be able to incorporate metal rods alongside your converter
- ◇ Weld flange bolts to the vehicle
- ◇ Park in a garage or well-lit area
- ◇ Install a tilt sensing vehicle alarm system