

HOW CAN OUR CITIZENS COMBAT THIS PROBLEM?

Theft of catalytic converters can be hard to stop. Use the following ideas to help protect your property:

Secure your vehicle in a locked garage. Set motion-sensitive lights and park in your driveway or in a brightly lit area in front of your home if you don't have a garage.

Install a catalytic converter anti-theft device such as a protective shield. Your mechanic or a search of the Internet can show you what types of devices are available.

Consider engraving your vehicle's identification number (VIN) or license plate number on the surface. This makes it traceable and more easily identifiable.

Turn up the sensitivity of your car alarm so that it goes off if thieves jostle your car.

Check your vehicle(s) frequently if your vehicle(s) belong(s) to a group, business or church that only uses the vehicle on certain days.

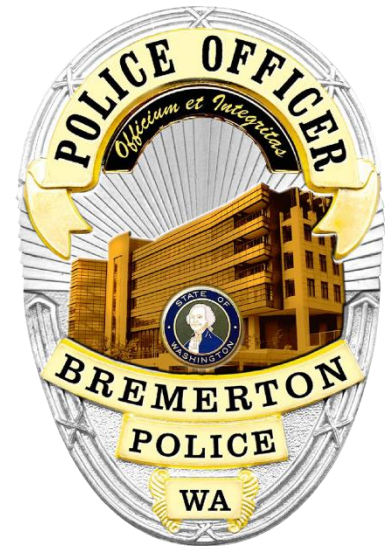
And.....Call 911 to report any suspicious activity!



Bremerton Police Department Community Resource Unit

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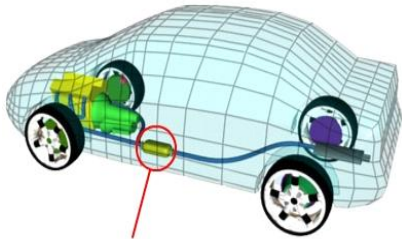
Catalytic Converter Theft



WHAT IS A CATALYTIC CONVERTER?

A catalytic converter is an air pollution abatement device that removes pollutants from motor vehicle exhaust, either by oxidizing them into carbon dioxide and water or reducing them into nitrogen and oxygen.

The catalytic converter device uses a catalyst to convert hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide in the car exhaust into harmless compounds.



Catalytic Converter

PHOTO FROM "HOW IT WORKS.COM"

In a catalytic converter, the catalyst (in the form of platinum, rhodium, and palladium) is coated onto a ceramic honeycomb or ceramic beads that are housed in a muffler-like package attached to the exhaust pipe. The catalyst helps to convert carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide. It converts the hydrocarbons into carbon dioxide and water. It also converts the nitrogen oxides back into nitrogen and oxygen.

WHY ARE CATALYTIC CONVERTERS POPULAR WITH THIEVES?

Converters use the metals platinum, palladium, and rhodium as the catalyst. These metals are extremely expensive and provide for high reward versus the risk in committing the theft.

HOW ARE CONVERTERS REMOVED FROM VEHICLES?

They are lightweight and an experienced thief can crawl under a parked vehicle and steal one in less than three minutes by using either a wrench for converters bolted on the car, or a battery-powered saw on converters that are welded onto the vehicle.



Attached Catalytic Converter Unit

WHAT IS THE MOST TARGETED VEHICLE?

Any vehicle manufactured after 1974 has some type of converter on it and can be a target. Currently, the most common vehicle attracting converter thieves is the Toyota Prius, as their converters contain more of these precious metals than other vehicles. Trucks and SUV's are also a target, as these vehicles seem to be the easiest to get under and remove the converter due to the configuration of the underside of the vehicle.

WHERE ARE THESE THEFTS TAKING PLACE?

Thieves target highly populated parking locations such as: park and rides, mall parking lots, larger store parking lots, apartment complexes, and secluded locations with a high concentration of vehicles.