



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060



MEDIA RELEASE

DATE/TIME: July 6, 2021 5:37 a.m.

LOCATION: 500 Block of Frederick St.

TOPIC: Catalytic Converter Theft and Shooting

CASE NUMBER: 21S-03868

INVOLVED SUBJECT(S)

SUSPECT(S)

Suspect #1: Unknown male subject-dark complexion

Suspect #2: Unknown male subject-dark complexion, approximately 5'9" tall

Suspect Vehicle: 2010-2015 Dark grey Toyota Prius with an unknown license plate

Charges: 246.3 PC – Willful Discharge of a Firearm-Negligence
487(a) PC – Grand Theft
10852 VC- Tamper with a Vehicle

INFORMATION

On Wednesday, July 6, 2021 at approximately 5:37 a.m., Santa Cruz Police Department Officers were dispatched to the 500 block of Frederick Street for a call of an interrupted catalytic converter theft and subsequent shooting.

A passerby witness reported seeing two male subjects underneath and around a parked Prius in an apparent attempt to remove the catalytic converter. The witness yelled at the suspects as they drove by and shortly thereafter, reported hearing approximately three (3) gunshots as they drove away. It is unknown which of the two suspects fired the shots or the direction in which they were fired. Officers arrived on scene moments later where they located shell casings confirming the shooting, however there was no evidence that anyone was struck by the shots. The shots were only heard by the witnesses and it is unknown at this time of the suspect(s) intended target. Officers also discovered the suspects were successful in stealing the catalytic converter from the vehicle.

One male suspect was described as approximately 5'9" tall and the other as wearing a flannel shirt. Both suspects were donning facial coverings (masks) and their ethnicity descriptions are unknown at this point.

The suspect vehicle is believed to be a dark grey colored 2010-2015 Toyota Prius (stock photo attached) with an unknown license plate. The vehicle was last seen traveling southbound on Frederick St. toward Broadway.

Santa Cruz Police Department Detectives are actively following up on leads, collecting and processing video surveillance as well as evidence collected from the scene. No suspects have been identified at this time.

For additional information, contact: Lieutenant Arnold Vasquez Phone: (831) 420-5856

Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; www.santacruzpolice.com.



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The Santa Cruz Police Department is asking anyone with information about this case or video surveillance in the immediate area of Frederick St. and Broadway to contact Santa Cruz Police Department Detective Trueblood at (831) 420-5837 or email the video file to ctrueblood@cityofsantacruz.com.

Anonymous tips can also be left on our Crime Tip Line at (831) 420-5995.

About Catalytic Converter Thefts in the City of Santa Cruz

The Santa Cruz Police Department has recorded approximately forty-three (43) catalytic converter thefts in 2021. In many of those cases, it is believed the suspects are from out of the area. On at least one occasion, patrol officers attempted to stop a suspect vehicle which resulted in a high-speed vehicle pursuit leading officers over Highway 17 toward the San Jose area. Due to safety concerns, the pursuit was terminated, and the suspects were unable to be identified.

Catalytic converter thefts are not unique to the Santa Cruz area. Thefts of catalytic converters are due to the lucrative copper contained within, which fetch a hefty payout from second-hand dealers, scrap yards, or recycle centers. In some cases, catalytic converters are marketed online. Many law enforcement agencies within the Bay Area have collaborated or established task forces in an effort to combat these thefts. Despite these efforts, thefts continue to occur due to high demand.

The Santa Cruz Police Department is asking for help from the community to curb these thefts. Home video surveillance systems, motion activated lighting or parking your vehicle in a well-lit area help deter thieves. In addition, pro-active communication within your respective neighborhoods and reporting suspicious activity to police by dialing 9-1-1 is strongly encouraged.

Anyone with information of these types of thefts is asked to contact Santa Cruz Police Department Investigations Section at (831) 420-5820 or leave information on the Crime Tip Line at (831) 420-5995.

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STOCK IMAGE-NOT ACTUAL SUSPECT VEHICLE

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