



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Community Message



DATE: February 2, 2023

TOPIC: Increase in Catalytic Converter Thefts

INFORMATION:

Community Advisory Catalytic Converter Thefts on The Rise

Last night, a proactive Santa Cruz Police patrol officer conducting extra checks spotted a suspect vehicle associated with catalytic thefts. The suspect vehicle sped off, and a pursuit began at HWY 17. Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office also assisted in tracking the suspect car. Unfortunately, the suspect vehicle got away. The hunt continues. Law Enforcement countywide is joining forces to curb the spike in catalytic converter thefts.

Catalytic converter thefts are a top crime throughout the Bay Area, and Santa Cruz is not immune. SCPD is dedicating resources to stop this new rash of catalytic crooks. We are analyzing data collection and monitoring trends in catalytic converter thefts; our teams are adjusting our patrols and tactics to end this rash of thefts.

We want our community to be aware of this type of crime increase. See graphic chart.

Between 2022-2023 the top two vehicle models experiencing catalytic converter thefts are Honda Accord (years 2001-2007) & Toyota Prius (years 2001-2010).

Total of 106 catalytic converters was stolen in the City of Santa Cruz between January 2022-February 1, 2023.

47 of the 106 catalytic converters were reported stolen so far this year as of February 2, 2023.

Other reported catalytic converter vehicles include:

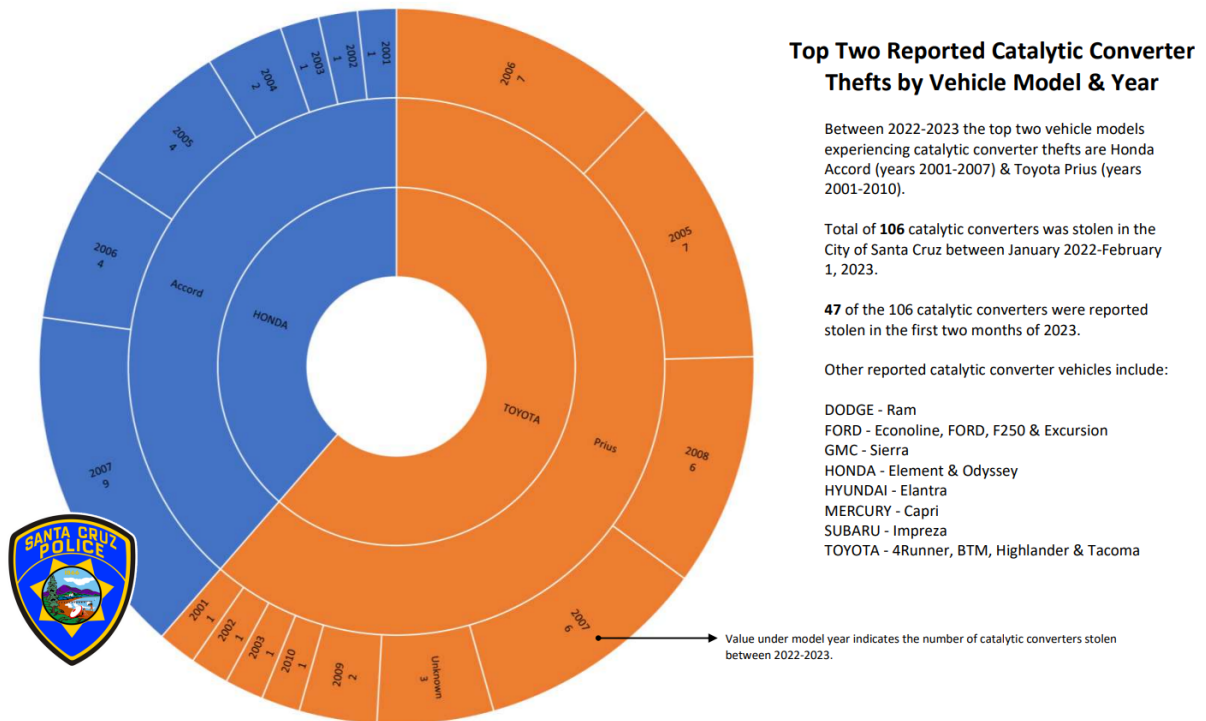
Dodge - Ram

FORD - Econoline, FORD, F250 & Excursion

GMC - Sierra

HONDA - Element & Odyssey

HYUNDAI - Elantra
 MERCURY - Capri
 SUBARU - Impreza
 TOYOTA - 4Runner, BTM, Highlander & Tacoma
 Value under model year indicates the number of catalytic converters stolen between 2022-2023.



Catalytic converter thieves generally target vehicles like trucks or SUVs because the higher ground clearance allows for easier access underneath the vehicle. But this crew associated with an older white four-door sedan targets Prius (plural of Prius) or Hondas. Call 911 if they see or hear suspicious activity near a parked Prius or Honda. The theft usually gets done in less than five minutes: Thieves jack up the vehicle, slide underneath and shear off the catalytic converter — an emissions control device in the exhaust system.

Thefts of catalytic converters increase each time the cost of scrap metal increases. It is attached to the exhaust system underneath your car. Catalytic converters contain expensive precious metals like platinum, palladium, and rhodium.

Here are a few great tips to protect yourself from this crime:

- Prius and Honda owners park their cars in their driveway or garage.
- Park under lights in areas where passers-by will most easily see your vehicle.
- Calibrate your car's alarm to set off when it detects vibration

- If your catalytic converter is a "bolt-on" model, you can have the bolts welded shut and have extra metal welded to the exhaust system.
- Install a catalytic converter protection device that will clamp around the converter.
- Etch your converter with your vehicle's license plate number in several different locations. It will help the police track your stolen property.

If you are a victim of catalytic converter theft, file a police report immediately after the theft is discovered.

If you have any information related to these cases, contact SCPD Investigations (831) 420-5820. Anonymous callers use (831) 420 -5995

Additional information, contact: [Joyce Blaschke](#) | SCPD Media & Community Relations | (831) 420-5844
