



The Camp Newsletter

February 2022



THE ALARMING INCREASE IN CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFTS

The frequency of catalytic converter thefts has increased sharply nationwide since the onset of the pandemic. According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, an average of 282 catalytic converters were stolen every month in 2019; in 2020 the average jumped to 1,203. In December alone, 2,347 catalytic converters were stolen. Church Mutual Insurance Co. saw a 350% increase in catalytic converter theft claims in 2020, and we're on pace to see even more in 2021.

Catalytic converters are part of a vehicle's exhaust system that help reduce emissions. They are attractive pieces to steal because they contain precious metals such as palladium, platinum and rhodium that can be sold to metal recyclers for a significant sum.

Taller vehicles, such as SUVs and trucks, are often targeted because they provide easier access to the catalytic converter. Using a wrench or saw, a thief can steal a catalytic converter in just a few minutes.

To help you reduce your organization's risk, our experts have compiled a list of security measures and ideas to consider implementing:

- **Park defensively:** Keep vehicles locked and parked in a secured, well-lit area when not in use. If a garage is available, park the vehicle inside. Think about parking close to building entrances where someone may be able to spot suspicious activity. Parking close to walls or fences can also impede access to the vehicle from underneath.
- **Keep an eye on things:** Consider the use of security surveillance cameras in the area where vehicles are parked. Cameras alone can serve as a visual deterrent, but they'll also provide valuable footage should a catalytic converter be stolen. If you don't use a vehicle daily, make it a point to check on it regularly.

- **Equip vehicles with added protection:** Consider whether options such as having a catalytic converter welded in place and/or placing a protective cover around it are necessary. Aftermarket products such as catalytic converter-specific locks, clamps, cages and alarms are commercially available.
- **Use an existing vehicle alarm to alert of potential theft:** Adjust or calibrate the sensitivity of your vehicle's alarm, if applicable, so vibration will activate the alarm.
- **Drive down the sell-on value:** Have the vehicle identification number (VIN) engraved on the catalytic converter and/or spray it with high temperature fluorescent paint. This deters theft by lessening the likelihood of the part being resold to scrap metal dealers.

Our Risk Control experts are here to help

If you have additional questions regarding the prevention of catalytic converter theft, please feel free to call us at any time. We can connect you with loss control experts who can assist.

And if you are interested in a camp or YMCA quote, please reach out to Michael Labadorf CPCU, Executive Vice President Brown & Brown. Michael.labadorf@bbrown.com 516-247-5850