

Good morning,

I hope things are well in your neighborhood and communities. October is Crime Prevention month across the nation. I will be sending crime prevention tip messages out weekly on crime prevention topics that focus on certain criminal activity we are experiencing across El Paso County. My messages will be brief and my goal is to hopefully provide a few tips that will help you from becoming a victim of a crime. Please forward my message on to the members of your community or neighborhood to help us get the word out. The first topic I will address is **catalytic converter theft**.

Catalytic converter theft has grown exponentially over the past year in El Paso County and the City of Colorado Springs. I continue to see reports daily of thefts that are occurring at park and rides, storage lots, and other areas where vehicles are stored or left for longer periods of time. Certain vehicles that are mostly being targeted, but not limited to, are church parking lot activity vans, recreational vehicles, and work vehicles such as large pickup trucks and panel vans. You will know if your catalytic converter has been stolen or tampered with when you start your vehicle and it makes a loud, growling noise and the vehicle does not perform as it usually does.

What is a catalytic converter?

It is a critical component of your vehicle's exhaust system that can cost up to \$2,000.00 to replace. Thieves target catalytic converters because they contain expensive metals that can have a street value of up to \$200.00, and removal can take less than one minute with a Saws-All type tool.

Theft Prevention Tips:

If possible, park in a garage or a well-lit area.

Engrave your VIN number into your catalytic converter. By doing this, it is the hope of law enforcement when a criminal tries to sell the stolen catalytic converter to a scrap company, for example, the company will see it has been stolen and will not buy the item.

Install a catalytic converter protection device. Search the internet to find the best deals and devices that are easy to install.

Check your car alarm to see if it is set to detect motion or vibration.

Report any incident to the Sheriff's Office and send or provide security videos so we can begin to track patterns, trends, and suspect/s and their vehicles.

I hope these tips and information will help you from becoming a victim. Please let me know of other topics/crimes you would like more information about and I will provide future crime prevention measures. Have a great week and stay safe.

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