



How To Protect Your Catalytic Converter

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Catalytic converters have been required in all gasoline-powered cars and trucks in the U.S. since 1975. They are part of a car's exhaust system and help reduce toxic emissions and pollutants. Catalytic converters also contain precious metals like palladium, platinum, and rhodium which are currently being sold for high prices on the black market.

The theft of catalytic converters has become noticeably on the rise within the last few years. In the last year due to the recent pandemic, the problem has exponentially increased as the price of precious metals used in catalytic converters has gone way up in value.

One metal, rhodium for example, has skyrocketed to about \$28,000.00 per ounce. Only a small fraction of that quantity is used in one catalytic converter. Although it is only worth a couple of hundred dollars, it still makes for a decent bounty for the local catalytic converter thief. Combine multiple thefts and it can start to add up to quite a bit!

Many car insurance companies have reported increasing claims of converter theft within the last few years. Double within the last year alone.

How To Know When Your Catalytic Converter Is Stolen

You wake up and get ready for work like any other day. Make your coffee, lunch, grab your keys and phone and head out the door. You get behind the wheel and start your car only to hear the loudest roar like you just started up a Harley Davidson!

This has become all too common to many people across the nation.

When your catalytic converter is gone, the engine noise does not get the chance to make it to the muffler and the result sounds like a freight train. There will be no mistake that your cat has been stolen.

You would not notice when approaching your vehicle, but you sure will once you start it!

How To Prevent Catalytic Converter Theft

There are a few options that may help prevent this type of theft. Some mechanics suggest welding the heads on the catalytic converter bolts, or simply shearing them off.

The aftermarket has responded by designing products to deter and prevent catalytic converter theft. The thought process behind such devices is that if it takes too long to make the theft, the thief will move on to easier targets. The “CatClamp”, for example, which starts at \$150, is a cage installed around the catalytic converter that makes for a lengthy amount of time to steal the cat. This product can be installed by a mechanic or at home with a specialized tool that is included with the device and is backed by a money-back guarantee.

Let’s face it, most of the time we don’t give much thought to this happening to our vehicle. Any car or truck can be a victim, but especially trucks with a higher clearance tend to be at a higher risk of theft as it is simply easier to access the cat.

While a thief can score a few hundred bucks per catalytic converter, it could cost around \$2,000 to repair a car if yours is stolen. Here are some tips to reduce the risk of catalytic converter theft:

- Park in a garage or a well-lit area
- Park near high-traffic areas or near building entrances
- Have your catalytic converter welded to your car
- Have your vehicle identification number (VIN) engraved on your catalytic converter
- Purchase a catalytic converter security device such as a “cat strap” or “cat clamp”
- Calibrate your car alarm or security system to detect vibration
- Set up cameras where you park

If you have a garage at home with a secure garage door, this can vastly improve your vehicle’s safety. People who have a truck with a lot of clearance underneath might want to use aftermarket products to protect their catalytic converter.

There are many products out there to choose from, so do your homework and find one that suits your vehicle and your budget best.

At the Catalytic Converter Shop, we always welcome you to visit us or give us a call to ask about what you can do to improve your catalytic converter’s safety.