



## Vacaville Police Department

660 Merchant Street

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Communications Center: 707.449.5200

Internet: <http://www.cityofvacaville.com/departments/police/pressrelease.php>

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## *Press Release*

**Today's Date:** November 18, 2014  
**Submitted By:** Lieutenant Matt Lydon  
**Phone:** (707) 449-5200  
**Type of rime/Incident:** Theft of Catalytic Converters  
**Location:** City of Vacaville – Residential and Commercial Locations

### **POLICE WARNING RESIDENTS ABOUT CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFTS**

While most car thieves steal car stereos, cell phones, CDs, or maybe something out of the glove compartment, a different type of theft from automobiles has victims asking “why:” the theft of catalytic converters.

The trend of catalytic converter thefts is happening nationwide and Vacaville is no exception. A catalytic converter is an emissions control device that cleans the exhaust that comes from your vehicle. Some drivers don't even know where the catalytic converter is located on their automobiles and wouldn't even know it was missing until their vehicle's engine was started. That's when a loud noise from underneath the car would alert the driver that something was seriously wrong. Unfortunately, many Vacaville residents have experienced just that: a catalytic converter stolen from their vehicle.

This year, from mid-September to mid-November, twenty-one (21) vehicles in the City of Vacaville had the catalytic converters taken. The thieves primarily targeted Toyota Tundra pickups, Toyota 4Runners, Toyota Sequoias, Dodge Ram pickups, and Honda Accords. These vehicles are targeted often because they provide ample ground clearance, allowing easy access to the catalytic converter. The catalytic converter is bolted on and can be removed with a wrench on older model vehicles, while most new vehicles require thieves to cut the catalytic converters from the vehicles. Why are thieves stealing catalytic converters?

The catalytic converter itself is not the target, but the precious platinum metal contained in the converters is the target. The platinum is recycled by thieves at metal recycling shops for an instant cash value - between \$100 and \$200 each when recycled.

Most of the Vacaville catalytic converter thefts have occurred at residences between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. and most of the vehicles targeted were parked in the driveway of residences. Some of the thefts have occurred in parking lots in the middle of the day.

The Vacaville Police Department is persistent in providing Vacaville residents tips for safeguarding their property and decreasing their chances of becoming a victim of theft or any other crime. Because catalytic converters are exposed and easily accessed by thieves, parking a vehicle in a garage, if available, always provides maximum security. Additionally, if residents observe suspicious behavior, such as someone performing vehicle work during odd hours with minimal artificial light (small flashlight), or someone performing automotive work underneath a vehicle in a parking lot, they should call Vacaville Police Dispatch at (707)449-5200 immediately.

Criminal activity can be reported at [www.cityofvacaville.com/departments/police](http://www.cityofvacaville.com/departments/police), or you can call “Crime Stoppers” and leave an anonymous tip at 707-644-STOP (7867). Crime Stoppers may pay up to \$1,000 for information that leads to an arrest.