

NICB Partners with Law Enforcement to Combat Catalytic Converter Thefts

A catalytic converter is a device that looks like a small muffler along with the exhaust system. It is designed to convert the environmentally hazardous exhaust emitted by an engine into less harmful gasses. To do this, manufacturers use platinum, palladium, or rhodium. In recent years, the values of these precious metals have increased significantly, and many investigators are attributing the dramatic increase in catalytic converter thefts to rising metal costs.

“The pandemic has had significant impacts on society. We have a lot of disenfranchised youth that are unemployed, and outreach programs are shut down or limited due to COVID. There is frustration and anger in society. We also are seeing public safety resource limitations and withdrawal of proactive policing due to budget constraints. I’ve been studying this for almost 30 years; when you have a perfect storm like this, we see that manifest in crimes against automobiles,” said NICB President & CEO David Glawe.



Reversing this trend will take a coordinated effort—one that NICB is uniquely positioned to support. NICB will continue to raise public awareness through an aggressive media campaign focused on target markets where we see the highest number of crimes.

Recently, the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) teamed up with Newport News and Hampton Police Departments to host a catalytic converter etching event. The

purpose of the event was to assist law enforcement in tying a converter to a stolen report or deter theft altogether.



Both Police Departments provided city mechanics to etch and paint catalytic converters based on where the vehicle is registered. The mechanics worked together to take a photo of the vehicle's VIN and etch it onto the converter. They would then use high-temperature paint to mark the converter that indicates the jurisdiction. The entire process took about five minutes per vehicle.

Additional etching events are currently being scheduled in Virginia. The NICB encourages law enforcement across the nation to hold similar events to help combat catalytic converter theft.

[Read More on Catalytic Converter Theft](#)

Anyone with information concerning insurance fraud or vehicle theft can report it anonymously by calling toll-free [800.TEL.NICB \(800.835.6422\)](tel:800.835.6422) or [submitting a form on our website](#).

About the National Insurance Crime Bureau: Headquartered in Des Plaines, Ill., the NICB is the nation's leading not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to combatting and preventing insurance crime through Intelligence, Analytics, and Operations; Education and Crime Prevention; and Strategy, Policy, and Advocacy. The NICB is supported by more than 1,200 property and casualty insurance companies and self-insured organizations. NICB member companies wrote over \$530 billion in insurance premiums in 2020, or more than 82% of the nation's property-casualty insurance. That includes more than 95% (\$236 billion) of the nation's personal auto insurance. To learn more, visit www.nicb.org.