

Catalytic Converters Stolen from Vehicles in Office Lot at Night, School Lot During the Day

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Catalytic converters in Darien are again the targets of thieves, who have been stealing them wherever and whenever they can — during the day, at night, at a school parking lot, at an office building parking lot.

It's not just happening in Darien.

[According to an Associated Press report](#) on Jan. 2:

"Thefts of the exhaust emission control devices have jumped over the past two years as prices for the precious metals they contain have skyrocketed. Thieves can expect to get anywhere from \$50 to \$300 if they sell the converters to scrap yards, which then sell them to recycling facilities to reclaim the precious metals

inside, including platinum, palladium and rhodium."

David Glawe, president of the National Insurance Crime Bureau, said interruptions in the supply chain for car parts is one of the reasons catalytic converters are up in Connecticut and across the nation:

"As the value of the precious metals contained within the catalytic converters continues to increase, so do the number of thefts of these devices," he said [in a statement to Hearst Connecticut Newspapers](#) last November and republished on the NCIB website. "There is a clear connection between times of crisis, limited resources, and disruption of the supply chain that drives investors towards these precious metals."

At 7:55 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 3, police received a report of stolen vehicle parts at the Darien Crossing office park at 320 Post Road. Catalytic converters had been stolen from four vehicles owned by one business.

All four vehicles had been parked in the lot at 7 p.m. the night before, and the thefts and damage was discovered the next morning at 7 a.m.

About a week earlier, on Jan. 27, a catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle parked in the lot at Ox Ridge School. The owner told police that when she left the lot at 3:30 p.m., the vehicle was very loud, and at home she discovered that the catalytic converter had been removed.

On Jan. 11, [essentially the same thing happened](#) when a man drove his pickup from the lower Town Hall parking lot.

It Can Be Done Quickly

"Removing a catalytic converter takes only minutes using some basic, readily available battery-operated tools from a local hardware store," according to the NCIB.

"It's costly for the vehicle owner due to the loss of work, finding and paying for alternate transportation, and then paying anywhere from \$1,000 to \$3,000 to get your car fixed."

Suggestions to Prevent Catalytic Converter Thefts

converter anti-theft device. These are available from various manufacturers and can provide a level of security from theft.

- If parking a fleet truck at a business overnight, consider enclosing the vehicle in a secured area that is well lighted, locked, and alarmed.
- For personal vehicles, if possible, park in a garage. If not possible and the vehicle must be parked in a driveway, consider installing motion sensor security lights. While lights may not provide complete security, it may make some thieves think twice, instead opting to leave the area and your car untouched.

In some cases, this theft is covered by insurance. The optional comprehensive portion of your insurance policy, the portion that covers damage caused to your car not caused by accident, covers this kind of loss.

However, the owner will be responsible for paying the deductible. If your deductible is \$1,000 and the cost to repair the damage costs \$1,000 or maybe a few hundred dollars more, drivers may not opt to file a claim.

The NICB advises drivers to contact their insurer to report the theft and determine the best course of action.