



## SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT**  
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### **SMPD Alerts Community of Catalytic Converter Thefts**

*Catalytic converter thefts are on the rise in San Mateo and San Mateo Police are offering a few prevention tips for the community as we investigate. Stay vigilant and protect your car from thieves!*

San Mateo, CA – San Mateo Police Department officers have been responding to an unusually high number of catalytic converter thefts across the city this year. Thieves have targeted various parts of the city, particularly in the evening hours. Mirroring the statewide trend of property crimes, San Mateo has also seen an uptick in these types of crimes. The San Mateo Police Department is actively working this investigation and seeking to capture the suspects. Anyone with street facing security cameras or any additional information is encouraged to call the San Mateo Police Department at (650) 522-7700. Anonymous tips can be submitted to <http://tinyurl.com/SMPDTips> or by calling (650) 522-7676.

Catalytic converter thefts are taking place because the converters contain several types of recyclable materials that can be easily “scrapped” for a quick profit. Thefts of catalytic converters increase each time the cost of scrap metal, particularly platinum, increases. The city of San Mateo and other areas of Northern California have seen an increase in the number of reported catalytic converter thefts. Catalytic converter thieves generally target high profile vehicles like trucks or SUV’s because the higher ground clearance allows for easier access underneath the vehicle. However, sports cars and sedans are not immune to converter theft. Currently, we are seeing Toyotas being targeted, specifically the Prius.

What can you do to protect your vehicle? Here are five prevention tips that can reduce your risk:

- Park in areas where your vehicle will most easily be seen by passers-by. For example, park under lights after dark or near windows at a business. Park near security cameras, if possible.
- Install street facing security cameras where your vehicle is parked overnight.
- If your catalytic converter is a “bolt on” model, you can have the bolts welded shut and have extra metal welded to the exhaust system.
- Install a catalytic converter protection device that will clamp around the converter.
- Etch your converter with your vehicle identification number in several different locations. This will help police track your property if it is stolen. If your converter is stolen, file a police report immediately after the theft is discovered.

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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