

MOTION

A catalytic converter is an exhaust emission control device that converts toxic gases and pollutants in exhaust gas from an internal combustion engine into less-toxic pollutants. Catalytic converter thefts are on the rise nationwide, and California has the dubious honor of leading the country in the number of converters stolen. Because of the external location and the use of valuable precious metals including rhodium, palladium and platinum, these devices are a target for thieves. As of March, rhodium was valued at \$17,400 per ounce, while palladium was valued at \$2,720 per ounce and platinum was valued at about \$1,072 per ounce.

Thieves sell the stolen catalytic converters for anywhere between \$300 and \$1,200 depending on the amount of metals in each one, but the cost to the vehicle owner can be thousands of dollars in parts and repair costs, not to mention other expenses such as missed time from work or arranging for alternate transportation.

According to the Los Angeles Police Department, reported thefts of catalytic converters in the City of Los Angeles have increased year after year from 2018 to 2021, with 972 reported thefts in 2018, 1,198 reported thefts in 2019, 3,131 reported thefts in 2020 and 5,880 reported thefts in 2021.

State leaders have recently introduced several pieces of legislation aimed to stem thefts of catalytic converters. They would require the devices to be marked with vehicle identification numbers and would tighten procedures for their sale and increase fines for stealing them. Various Cities across Southern California have also passed local ordinances making it illegal to possess a catalytic converter without proof of ownership. It is important that the City of Los Angeles take all necessary steps to curb the theft of catalytic converters throughout the City.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that Council request the City Attorney prepare and present a draft ordinance prohibiting the unlawful possession of catalytic converters, similar to those approved by the Cities of Lake Forest, Desert Hot Springs and Mission Viejo, Irvine and others.

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