

# Vehicle Theft Update

## A Focus on Catalytic Converters

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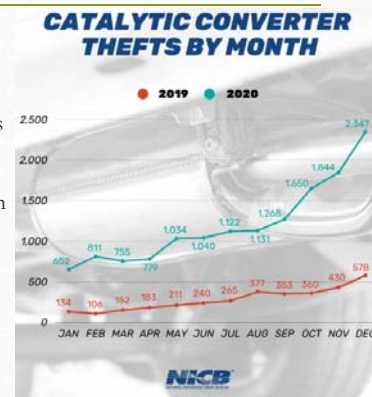
Colorado State Patrol



## Theft of Catalytic Converters

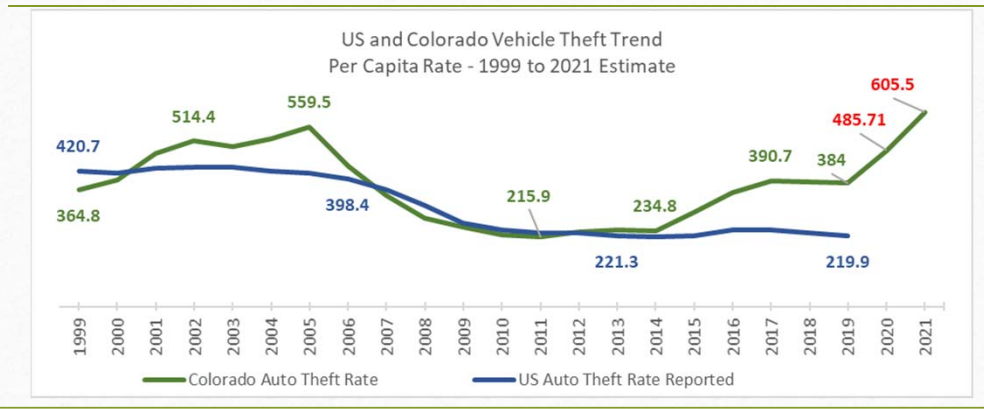
### A Nationwide and International Concern

- May 2020 - International Association of Auto Theft Investigators initiated a Catalytic Converter Workgroup to address international concerns on the increase in catalytic converter thefts.
- June 2020 – CARFAX reported ~20% more catalytic converter replacements than the same time period in 2019 (Jan-June). Failure rate on catalytic converters is less than 5% of replacements – where it is believed 95% of replacements are due to theft.
- March 2021 – National Insurance Crime Bureau reported significant increases in catalytic converter thefts<sup>1</sup>
- March 2021 as the highest-observed number of reported catalytic converter replacements (as a share of service visits) to CARFAX since August 2018.
- May 2021 - International Association of Chiefs of Police – Vehicle Crimes Committee has undertaken an endeavor to study the increase of catalytic converter thefts.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nicb.org/news/blog/catalytic-converter-thefts-skyrocket-across-nation>

## Colorado Ranked #2 Nationally for Auto Theft<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> On August 26, 2021, NICB provided the ForeCast Report, which ranked Colorado #2 per capita nationally, Denver Metro ranked #3 and Pueblo ranked #7.

Notes

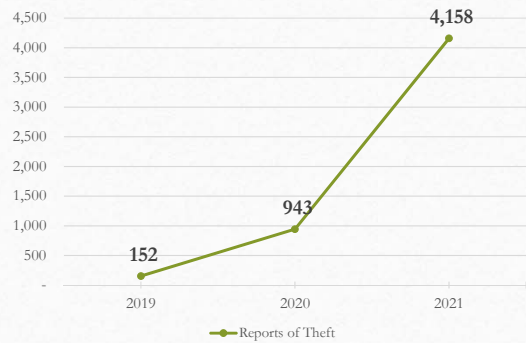
Data

## Theft of Catalytic Converters in Colorado 2019 to 2021 YTD (Jan-August)

|                        | 2019       | 2020       | 2021 YTD     |
|------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Agencies Reporting     | 44         | 24         | 40           |
| Per Capita Rate        | 160.0      | 1,229.3    | 4,849.7      |
| <b>Reported Thefts</b> | <b>152</b> | <b>943</b> | <b>4,158</b> |

+520%    +341%

+2,636%



## Theft of Catalytic Converters

### +520% in 2020 and +341% YTD in 2020

- It's primarily an opportunistic property crime.
- Catalytic converters contain trace amounts of precious metals, including **platinum, palladium and rhodium**, which in early March 2021 hit nearly \$30,000 per ounce.<sup>1</sup> As the value of the precious metals contained within the catalytic converters continues to increase, so do the number of thefts of these devices.
- A universal catalytic converter, meeting federal regulations, used to cost about \$350. Now, a single converter ranges between \$1,000 and \$2,000, though the overall replacement cost depends on the vehicle and how many converters the car requires.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.marketplace.org/2021/03/22/as-precious-metals-prices-soar-so-do-catalytic-converter-thefts/>

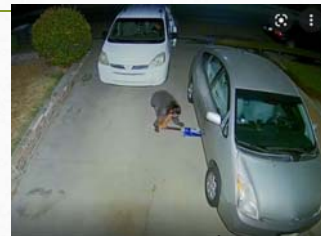
<sup>2</sup> <https://coloradosun.com/2021/06/17/thieves-stealing-catalytic-converters-in-colorado-while-price-to-replace-is-up/>



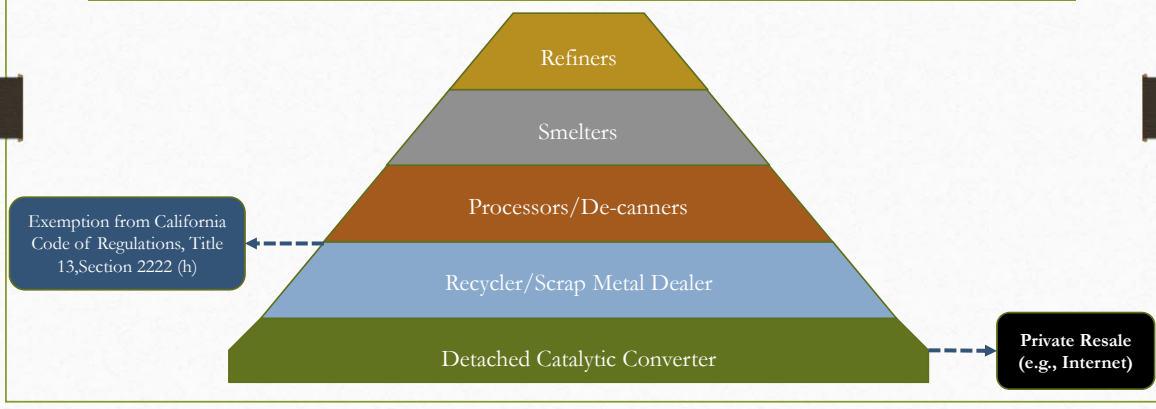
## Challenges

### Theft of Catalytic Converters

- Catalytic Converters are easy to steal
- Lack of Parts Marking - Minimal risk of identifying the catalytic converter as stolen
- Easy to transact a stolen catalytic converter with minimal/no regulation
- Theft of the motor vehicle part results in low risk of enforcement, prosecution, adjudication or penalty
- The value of the precious metals supports a strong market for detached catalytic converters



## Detached Catalytic Converter Process



## Efforts to Curb Catalytic Converter Thefts

- Participation in the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators Catalytic Converter Workgroup
- Participation in the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators Catalytic Converter Subcommittee
- Researched theft prevention solutions (e.g., alarms & shields range from \$200-\$450 each plus installation; cages & cables range from \$200-\$500 plus installation; Paint & Etching solutions)
- Worked with Nlets, VRSS, RetainAGroup, and NVS to provide a statewide program to offer and distribute Catalytic Converter Labels.
- CATPA funded task forces (BATTLE and C-MATT) have focused on catalytic converter thefts with pending large scale investigation in criminal organization.

CATETCH Labels



## IAATI Catalytic Converter Theft Workgroup Recommendations

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1. Identify with certainty the person selling the detached catalytic converter.
2. Identify with certainty the vehicle from which the detached catalytic converter was removed.
3. Require a traceable payment and prohibit cash transactions.
4. Require records of detached catalytic converter transactions be maintained and made accessible to law enforcement upon request.
5. The penalty for not meeting the above requirements needs to be a sufficient deterrent.

## Other State Efforts Curbing Catalytic Converter Theft

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- Tennessee Senate Bill 1612 (Effective 07/01/2021) - Aimed at deterring theft and resale of catalytic converters<sup>1</sup>
- Texas House Bill 4110 (Effective 09/01/2021) House Bill 4110 – Relating to the sell, recording and transaction of catalytic converters
- North Carolina Senate Bill 99 (Effective 12/1/2021) – Clarifies law on the theft of catalytic converters
- Ohio House Bill (Introduced on 8/26/2021 by Rep. Bob Young) – To protect consumers from catalytic converter theft and create more transparent guidelines for businesses.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tn.gov/commerce/news/2021/6/8/new-tennessee-registration-law-aimed-at-deterring-theft--resale-of-catalytic-converters.html>

## Applicable Laws

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- [49 CFR Parts 541, 542 and 543 – Parts Marking](#)
- [28 CFR 25.56 - Responsibilities of junk yards and salvage yards and auto recyclers](#)
- [42 U.S.C. Chapter 85 Subchapter II - Clean Air Act](#)
- [5 CCR 1001-24 \(Regulation 20\) Part C - After Market Catalytic Converters](#)
- [42-5-104 C.R.S Theft of motor vehicle parts](#)
- [42-4-2201 C.R.S. Definitions](#)
- [42-4-2203 C.R.S. Vehicle verification system - fees – rules](#)
- [42-4-2204 C.R.S. Theft discovered - duties – liability](#)
- [18-13-111 C.R.S. Purchases of commodity metals](#)