



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"Conservators of the Peace"

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 12, 2008

Contact: Sgt. David Thompson

Public Information Officer

PIO Phone: (503) 209-5613

Free Service from Local Muffler Shops Deters Catalytic Converter Thieves

Summary of Event:

Detectives from the Washington County Sheriff's Office are investigating an increase in the theft of catalytic converters over the last few months. In response to this rise, a partnership between local muffler shops and the Sheriff's Office has provided a free solution to local motorists that will help deter the would-be thieves.

Details of Event:

Over the last year, there have been over 100 thefts of catalytic converters reported in Washington County, more than half of those thefts occurred in April alone. The Washington County Sheriff's Office is working with local Meineke and Midas exhaust specialists to curtail this problem before it becomes an epidemic.

A catalytic converter is a device that is part of most modern vehicle exhaust systems in the United States. The device converts toxic emissions from an internal combustion engine into less toxic substances. Several of the elements used in the converter, including platinum and palladium, are valuable precious metals, which makes it attractive to thieves.

Washington County, like many regions across the nation, is seeing a sharp increase in catalytic converter thefts. The primary targets have been vehicles with high ground clearance. Most victims report that these thefts have occurred while the vehicles were parked in their own driveways. The estimated replacement costs for most catalytic converters range from several hundred to over one thousand dollars. Experts believe that the best way to eliminate the easy and quiet removal of bolt-on catalytic converters is to tack-weld the mounting bolts into place. This makes it impossible to remove the bolts without making considerable noise. Thieves who persist in their efforts to steal catalytic converters modified by this process, will do so at a much greater risk of detection and apprehension.

To facilitate this solution, the Sheriff's Office has formed a crime prevention partnership with several Meineke and Midas service locations in Washington County. These shops have generously agreed to perform the necessary tack-weld to the catalytic converter that will make them harder to steal. The shops are providing this service free-of-charge to anyone with a personally owned vehicle. Vehicle owners who wish to take advantage of this quick procedure are asked to call one of the below listed businesses to arrange an appointment.

215 SW Adams Ave MS #32 • Hillsboro, OR 97123-3874 • (503) 846-2700

www.co.washington.or.us/sheriff

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Midas of Beaverton
4325 SW Cedar Hills Blvd.
(503) 643-5561

Meineke of Hillsboro
2901 SE 73rd Ave.
(503) 848-3231

Meineke of Beaverton
13203 SW Canyon Rd.
(503) 644-3522

Meineke of Tigard
13707 SW Pacific Hwy.
(503) 624-9298

Meineke of Sherwood
13985 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Rd.
(503) 625-4831