



# EL SEGUNDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

348 MAIN STREET, EL SEGUNDO, CA 90245

(310) 524-2200

DAVID CUMMINGS, CHIEF OF POLICE

## Press Release

January 17, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**EL SEGUNDO** *EtchN Catch* **POLICE DEPT.**

The El Segundo Police Department announces  
a FREE service to Truck and SUV owners  
residing or working in the City of El Segundo

**Saturday, February 2, 2008**  
**9am to 3pm**

Please Contact The El Segundo Police Department at

**(310) 524-2200**

**City of El Segundo  
Maintenance Facility  
150 Illinois Street**

Trucks and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) are prime targets for thieves looking to steal catalytic converters and third row seats.

The catalytic converter is part of the exhaust system located underneath the vehicle and is designed to reduce the toxicity of emissions from an internal combustion engine. Thieves steal the catalytic converters because they contain small amounts of precious metals including platinum – which is worth up to \$1,290 an ounce; palladium – which is worth up to \$370 an ounce; and rhodium – which can trade for up to \$6,000 an ounce on the market. Vehicles including 1990's models of Toyota Trucks and SUVs have been specifically targeted due to their higher stock ground clearance levels. Owners often only realize their catalytic converter has been stolen when they hear an abnormally loud exhaust noise upon starting their vehicle.

In addition to catalytic converters, criminals are targeting SUVs, specifically the Chevrolet Tahoe and the GMC Yukon, for their 50/50 third row seats. Thieves are able to steal the converters and third row seats in as little as 90 seconds and the cost to the owner for replacement of these devices can range between \$300 and \$1,200 for the converters, and in excess of \$1,000 for the third row seats.

Catalytic converters and third row seats do not have serial numbers or identifiable markings making it very difficult for law enforcement officers to return the property to the owner when suspects are arrested with these stolen vehicle parts in their possession.

To help combat these thefts, the City of El Segundo is offering **FREE** etching on catalytic converters and 50/50 third row seats. As a way to identify these parts, the California vehicle license plate number will be etched onto the heat shield of the catalytic converter and/or the metal and plastic portion of the third row seat. This identifiable etching will help law enforcement officers identify the victim of the theft and return the property to the owner.

This **FREE** service will be offered on Saturday, February 2, 2008, between the hours of 9am and 3pm, and **appointments are recommended**. Persons who choose to receive **FREE** etching on a drop-in basis may experience delays. The etching service will be conducted at the City of El Segundo Maintenance Facility located at 150 Illinois Street. This offer is only available to El Segundo residents and persons who are employed at businesses in the City of El Segundo. If you have any questions regarding this **FREE** service, or if you would like to make an appointment, please contact The El Segundo Police Department at (310) 524-2200 or Detective Marco Lemus at (310) 524-2284.

Media Contact: Lieutenant Bob Turnbull  
310-524-2260