



Crime Stoppers of Wichita/Sedgwick County, Kansas
P.O. Box 2601
Wichita, KS 67201

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Officer Kevin Wheeler
Coordinator
Crime Stoppers of Wichita/
Sedgwick County
316-268-4606

**** News Release ****

Crime Stoppers Increases Rewards to fight Catalytic Converter Thefts

(WICHITA, Kan.) - Crime Stoppers of Wichita – Sedgwick County announced today increased rewards to help combat catalytic converter thefts in Sedgwick County. The crime-fighting program is offering to pay \$1,000 rewards for tips that lead to the felony arrests of persons involved in transactions of stolen catalytic converters. Crime Stoppers will also pay \$100 rewards for tips leading to arrests in misdemeanor catalytic converter theft cases. This campaign is sponsored by EMC Insurance Company, which donated \$5,000 in support of the program.

“Catalytic converter thefts can cost individuals and businesses thousands of dollars, and these crimes put people in financial hardships,” said Henry Donaldson, Crime Stoppers Chairperson. “This is our way of showing the community how serious we are about this issue.”

Catalytic converters are a high commodity due to the price of the precious metals that are found inside. The Wichita Police Department (WPD) said there were more than \$1 million in reported losses from catalytic converter thefts through mid-December. The losses are significantly higher than the more than \$285,000 in losses reported in 2019.

WPD officials argue that they are limited in taking criminal action due to language in the Scrap Metal Theft Reduction Act. The state law prevents municipalities like the city of Wichita from creating and

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enforcing ordinances that regulate provisions of the state law. Instead, the Kansas Attorney General's Office is responsible for enforcement, including civil action and fines to scrap metal dealers.

"Because we are faced with so many obstacles, we are reaching out to our community to ask them to provide us with necessary and valuable information," said Sgt. Trevor McDonald, supervisor of the WPD Larceny Section. "If we can find out who is accepting these stolen converters and who is not playing by the rules, we will be on a path to bring the high numbers of stolen converters down."

Tipsters should submit tips in one of three ways:

- Call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 316-267-2111
- Submit a tip by downloading the FREE P3 app; or
- Submit a tip online at www.wichitasedgwickcountycrimestoppers.com

All tips are anonymous, and no one will ever ask the tipster's name. Crime Stoppers is a division of the non-profit Wichita Metro Crime Commission.

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