

Thieves Targeting Car Parts Leaving Owners Fuming

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Posted on : 2014/6/18 4:44:16

OVERLAND PARK, KS (KCTV) - More and more drivers parking in Overland Park are returning to their vehicles to discover they have been a victim of an upsetting crime.



Thieves are stealing the catalytic converters and leaving car owners faced with costly repairs.

Overland Park police reported 43 thefts in 60 days, and police believe there are more cases that haven't been reported to authorities.

Popular parking lots have been hit and even in daylight hours. At least half a dozen car owners were victimized at the Overland Park Regional Medical Center's employee parking lot.

"It's happening to a lot of people across Overland Park and the Kansas City area. It's something that's getting ridiculous as far as the numbers we are seeing," Overland Park Police Department Officer Gary Mason said.

Many of the thefts are along the busy Interstate 435 corridor. Thieves are targeting apartment lots and other busy parking lots.

It takes just a few minutes for thieves seeking the precious metals to strike but the cost and inconvenience is much more long lasting for vehicle owners.

James Dorries was working at a restaurant near Oak Park Mall when the car he had borrowed from his girlfriend was ripped off in broad daylight. A co-worker noticed that the vehicle's exhaust was hanging on the ground and alerted him.

"Oh my God, I almost wanted to cry," said Alyssa Kirkpatrick when her boyfriend told her about the issue. "I didn't know what to do or who to call or nothing."

Police got a picture of the SUV that the suspects used in ripping off Kirkpatrick's vehicle. However, police believe the thieves are stealing vehicles and using stolen license plates in committing their crimes.