

RCW 9A.82.180 Catalytic converters—Marking requirements—

Defense. (1) Any person who removes a catalytic converter from a vehicle for a purpose other than maintenance, repair, or demolition, or who knowingly possesses an unmarked detached catalytic converter, must permanently mark the detached catalytic converter with the last eight digits of the originating vehicle's vehicle identification number such that at least a portion of the marking is visible from any side. The marking must be completed in a reasonable time after removal, but no later than 24 hours after removal, and before off-site transport of the detached catalytic converter.

(2) Detached catalytic converters that are not marked as required by this section are subject to immediate seizure and forfeiture by law enforcement.

(3) (a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, it is a gross misdemeanor for any person to intentionally remove, alter[,] or obliterate from a detached catalytic converter the last eight digits of the originating vehicle identification number, as required by subsection (1) of this section.

(b) A person who intentionally removes, alters, or obliterates from a detached catalytic converter the last eight digits of the original vehicle identification number is guilty of a class C felony punishable according to chapter 9A.20 RCW if the person has previously been convicted under this subsection.

(4) It is a gross misdemeanor for any person who is not a scrap processor licensed under chapter 46.79 RCW or vehicle wrecker licensed under chapter 46.80 RCW to knowingly possess, sell, or offer for sale six or fewer detached catalytic converters that do not comply with the marking requirements under subsection (1) of this section.

(5) It is a class C felony for any person who is not a scrap processor licensed under chapter 46.79 RCW or vehicle wrecker licensed under chapter 46.80 RCW to knowingly possess, sell, or offer for sale seven or more detached catalytic converters that do not comply with the marking requirements under subsection (1) of this section.

(6) Where a case is legally sufficient to charge an alleged juvenile offender with a violation under this section, and that violation would be the alleged offender's first violation involving detached catalytic converters, the prosecutor is encouraged to divert the case pursuant to RCW 13.40.070.

(7) It is an affirmative defense to this section that the possessor removed the detached catalytic converter with the permission of the registered owner of the vehicle or vehicles. [2024 c 301 s 23.]

Findings—Intent—2024 c 301: "The legislature finds that rates of catalytic converter theft have rapidly increased statewide and nationwide, due in part to existing challenges with accurately identifying stolen catalytic converters and tracking them through the stream of commerce after they have been removed from their originating vehicles. The legislature also finds that recent evidence suggests most purchases of stolen catalytic converters are conducted by unlicensed, unregulated purchasers.

Therefore, the legislature intends to require all purchasers to be licensed and subject to regulation and inspection. To facilitate the ability to track catalytic converters, the legislature further intends to require permanent marking of catalytic converters for the purpose of identifying the originating vehicle. The legislature also

intends to create a related structure for enforcing these provisions and imposing penalties commensurate with the enforcement and penalty structures found in comparable areas of law." [2024 c 301 s 1.]

Effective date—2024 c 301: "This act takes effect April 1, 2025." [2024 c 301 s 30.]