

NYPD Makes Arrests in Fleet Vandalisms

By: Keith T. Kerman

Since December 18, 2018, NYC's fleet has been the target of vandals removing and stealing catalytic converters from the under-carriages of our vehicles while parked on the street. Most of the impacted units were our fuel efficient hybrid Toyota Priuses. Five agencies were impacted, with Housing and Preservation Development (HPD) being the hardest hit by far. The vandals go underneath the vehicles, cutting out the converters, likely to sell them for the steel or as parts. We have recorded over \$40,000 in damage so far, as well as towing costs and disruption of normal agency operations. Most of the thefts were in upper Manhattan, but three other boroughs, Brooklyn, Bronx, and Queens were also impacted.



When these thefts started, DCAS quickly turned to our partners in the NYPD. NYPD immediately began focusing on this theft spree and taking action. We are pleased to report that investigators from the NYPD Auto Crime Division have now effected three arrests of individuals identified as having been involved in multiple thefts of catalytic converters from City-owned vehicles, including DOT, Parks, HPD, Buildings, and DEP. Two of the arrests were on March 27, and a third on April 2.

We want to thank the NYPD Auto Crime Team led by Sergeant Toczek, along with Detective Valenza, Detective Angeles, and Police Officer Carey. We also want to thank NYPD Deputy Commissioner Robert Martinez, Director Vartan Khachadurian, and NYPD Inspector Scott Olexa of Fleet Services for assisting these efforts. Finally we want to thank the Agency Transportation Coordinators (ATCs) from each impacted agency; Harris Kaplan, Greg Blain, and James Ambenge of DCAS Fleet Services; and Robert Silberstein of DCAS Legal, all of whom have been helpful in this effort.

While we hope to see the end of this theft ring, we will remain vigilant and continue our partnership with NYPD and our fleet agencies to address any future efforts to target our fleet!

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