



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



NEWS RELEASE

Police Department

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NEW METHOD TO STOP CYCLE OF AUTO THEFT “CAR CRUSHING”

(San Diego) Mayor Jerry Sanders, the San Diego Police Department and the San Diego City Attorney announce the first car crushing action to be taken in San Diego County in an effort to break the cycle of auto theft. A car will be crushed on November 6, 2006 at 11:30 a.m. at Ecology Auto Recycling, 850 Energy Way in Chula Vista.

The top 14 cars stolen in the city of San Diego are Hondas and Acuras. These cars are also most commonly used for street racing. The motors and transmissions in these vehicles are frequently destroyed by their owners due to abuse. Instead of purchasing a replacement motor for approximately \$12,000.00, a more cost effective option is to replace the burned-up motor with a stolen one.

This practice was recently illustrated during a Drag-Net operation in the Otay area. One-hundred cars were inspected. Approximately 25 of those cars had motors or transmissions which were confirmed stolen or had the identification numbers removed.

The standard response by law enforcement agencies is to remove the stolen or unidentifiable part and destroy it. The car would then be returned to the owner. On several occasions, these owners have replaced the motors and transmissions with stolen parts, again.

A SDPD officer on the Drag-Net team approached a deputy city attorney and suggested crushing cars under California Vehicle Code Section 10751. The section states that cars and parts can be “destroyed” after certain criteria are met. The courts have agreed to allow local law enforcement agencies to crush cars, transmissions and engines in an effort to stop the cycle of auto theft.

Interview opportunities at the car crushing news conference: Mayor Jerry Sanders; Executive Assistant Chief Bill Maheu, SDPD; Assistant City Attorney Chris Morris; Chief Rick Emerson (CVPD) SD County Chiefs and Sheriffs Association; and various representatives from the allied law enforcement agencies in San Diego County.

SDPD

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SPECIAL NOTES: Ecology Auto Recycling has three lots in Chula Vista on Energy Way. The location of the news conference is the last lot on the right hand side. The driveway is marked with a sign that says "Ecology Auto Recycling, 850 Energy Way." The driveway is a long ramp down to the lot. Additionally, this lot is not paved and it is very dusty. (High heeled shoes are not recommended.)

There will be a number of undercover officers and detectives at the news conference. Please advise your photographers **not to photograph anyone who is not wearing a uniform** at this news conference.

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