



VIN Etching Fact Sheet

What is VIN etching?

VIN etching is the permanent engraving of a vehicle's federally registered vehicle identification number (VIN) onto its windshield and windows. VIN etching is often seen as a deterrent to thieves because it not only makes it nearly impossible for thieves to profit from selling windows and windshields, but it also makes it more difficult for thieves to find a way to dispose of the vehicle once it has been stolen. As a result, VIN etching is recommended by police and insurance agencies to protect against auto theft.

The process to have your car VIN etched is fairly simple and takes only a few minutes. Typically, the process includes developing a stencil of your VIN number which is then used with glass etching paste to engrave the number onto the windows of your vehicle.

Protection Against Auto Theft

Cars and trucks are usually stolen for one of two reasons, resale value or individual parts. Before selling a stolen vehicle a thief would have to replace the VIN-etched glass, a time consuming and expensive task. And, if a thief tries to sell the parts from a vehicle for profit, the VIN-etched parts are a higher risk for both the thief and the disreputable auto parts seller. Therefore, the reduced profit and high risk associated with stealing a VIN-etched car make it a less likely target for auto theft.

Other Advantages of VIN Etching

A number of insurance agencies offer a discount off the comprehensive portion of your insurance if your vehicle is protected by VIN etching.

Where to Get a VIN Etching

Please call APD's Auto Burglary & Theft Interdiction Project for information on the next VIN etching event at 512-974-6290 or visit www.austintexas.gov/department/auto-theft