



SHOP A CHOP SHOP

We need your help to rid the West Midlands of illegal 'chop shops'. These dangerous places encourage car theft. Stolen cars are sold on to 'chop shops' where they are then stripped for parts. Often, these parts are then used to repair a car that's been written off by an insurance company.

The people putting these cars back together often have NO qualifications and will then sell the botched-together vehicle on legitimate websites, meaning not only could the next car you buy be made from stolen parts, it could also be extremely dangerous.

Chop shops are putting lives at risk, creating a demand for stolen cars, and damaging the reputation of legitimate salvage yards. Tell us what you know and SHOP A CHOP SHOP.

If you have any information call West Midlands Police on **101** or Crimestoppers anonymously **0800 555 111**.

How do the chop shops get hold of written off cars in the first place?

The answer is anyone can buy a damaged car. As it's declared salvage by the insurance company there are no laws or licences needed to buy it. A chop shop could buy a damaged car for a few hundred pounds, 'repair' it with parts from a stolen-to-order car and then sell it on. The MOT would still apply from the original vehicle, before it was written off, so the car would then be sold for thousands of pounds with NO safety checks meaning...

- A huge profit for these criminals
- An innocent member of the public having their car stolen
- A dangerous car sold to another innocent person
- A un-roadworthy car on the streets that we drive and walk on



What is a chop shop?

A place where criminals sell stolen cars. Sometimes the cars are stolen to order, depending on what vehicle the chop shop wants to 'repair'. If the parts aren't used in an existing vehicle, the serial numbers are often removed and the parts sold on websites to unwitting buyers.

What are the signs?

There are many legitimate salvage yards operating in the West Midlands, but we know there are also chop shops out there. These can be set up in industrial units, garage/mechanic premises or even in someone's back garden. Here's some signs that might identify a chop shop:

- Suspicious activity around industrial units, often at unusual times of the day, or night
- Noise coming from buildings out of hours
- Vehicles that look out of place going into workshops or locations and not coming back out
- Large amounts of car parts being stored, sometimes in odd places such as gardens
- Shipping containers in unusual locations
- Items stored that are clearly expensive, such as engines and gearboxes, outside and out of place
- Items for sale via on-line auction sites from the same seller, often in large quantities of the same item or similar

If you suspect a chop shop is operating near you, or recognise some of the signs, please report it. You can do this by calling **101** or ringing Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

