

[Menu](#)[Watch Live](#)[Quick links...](#)

NEWS



# Dodge promised a security fix to curb theft of Chargers, Challengers, but it still hasn't happened



It was a software update aimed to stop widespread thefts of Dodge muscle cars. But the fix seems to be delayed indefinitely.



By: [Jim Kiertzner](#)

Posted at 1:58 PM, Jul 20, 2021 and last updated 6:28 PM, Jul 20, 2021

[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

(WXYZ) — It was a software update aimed to stop widespread thefts of Dodge muscle cars. But the fix seems to be delayed indefinitely.

## Related:

- **Michigan State Police internal bulletin shows widespread thefts of Fiat Chrysler's hot cars**
- **Dodge to fix security issue allowing easy theft of Chargers, Challengers after 7 Action News report**
- **Big 3 automakers issue responses after call to take action on security issue involving key fobs**

In previous reports, we revealed how Stellantis Dodge Chargers and Challengers are hot targets for thieves. The cars can outrun police and are worth big money on the black market.



String of stolen Dodge Chargers in Macomb County ...

WXYZ-TV Channel 7 · Follow

Share

Recent Stories from wxyz.com



ADVERTISEMENT

CLOSE



## Hot sun today

Two thefts happened just last week here in metro Detroit, one chase moved to the freeway, lasted several miles to Southgate until the vehicle ran out of gas. The other Dodge Charger was stolen in Inkster with a police chase ending in a dead-end street.

[A software update was announced in March by Dodge](#) as a result of our 7 Action News exclusive reports.

[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

# DODGE SOFTWARE UPGRADE

- ANNOUNCED IN MARCH, FOLLOWING 7 ACTION NEWS REPORT
- AIMED AT CHARGER AND CHALLENGER MODELS EQUIPPED WITH 392-CU.-IN. HEMI® V-8 OR SUPERCHARGED 6.2-LITER HEMI V-8 ENGINES
- SECURITY MODE WOULD LIMIT ENGINES TO IDLE SPEED, PREVENTING FAST GETAWAYS



It was supposed to be available in June, but what's being done now?

One Dodge owner contacted us from Alabama. He wants to know why Stellantis and Dodge haven't communicated this problem to dealers and owners.

ADVERTISEMENT

He found out the hard way, after his was stolen.

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT





"Cars like mine are targeted because they can outrun the police. There's been two innocent bystanders killed in these things in, you know, the past couple of months," said Morris Newman.

This was his 2019 Dodge Challenger Scat Pack Widebody:

[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



This is how it looks today in a junkyard, totaled after a 3-car crash. Nobody was injured:

[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT





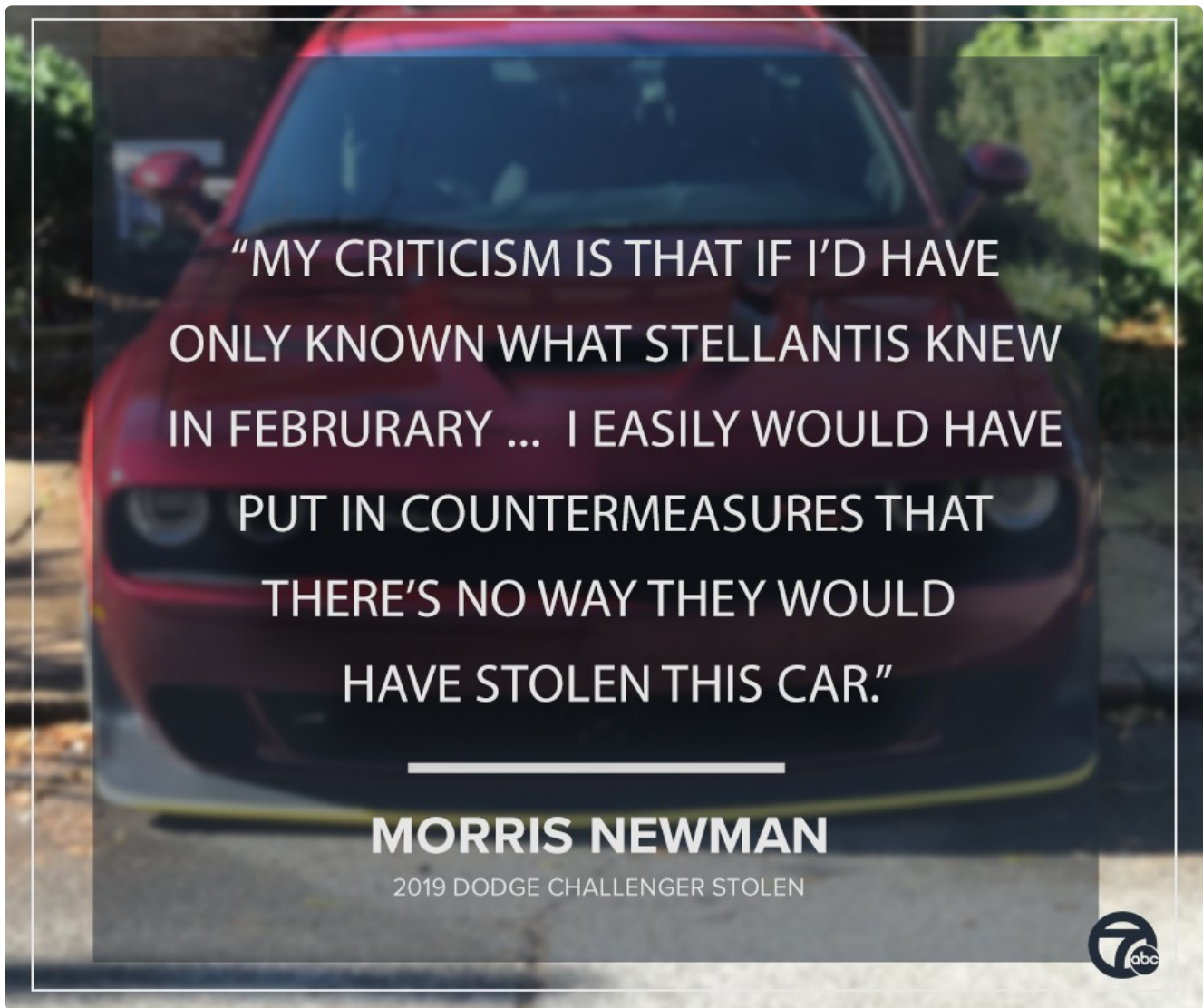
It was stolen outside of his house in the middle of the night.

"I knew beyond any doubt these cars can't be driven without the keys, and I had both keys," he said.

Then police told him what has become common knowledge to them, that these muscle cars are stolen within seconds by thieves who know how to duplicate the key fobs with a computerized device we won't discuss in this report.

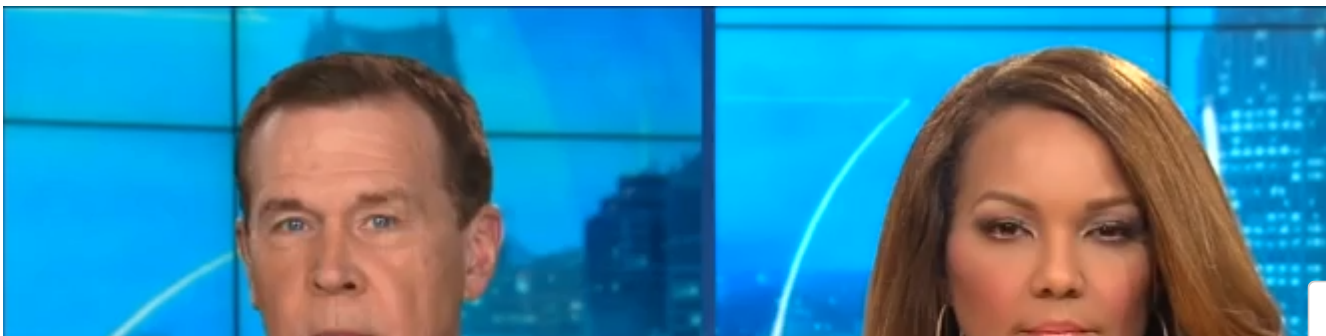
[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



Another local owner had a Charger stolen, got paid by insurance, then took extra measures to keep his second Charger safe with extra locks.

Dodge announced a fix that would be sent out to dealers to do for customers by the end of June.



CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT





"Your story prompted my having a conversation with Tim Kuniskis, a high ranking member of Dodge," said former Detroit Police Chief James Craig in our March update story.

Those were our stories Morris Newman watched when he Googled for information.

He says he went back to his dealer.

"When I told him about the things that were in your TV report and what were in the March 22 press release, they were shocked to hear. So apparently, Stellantis hasn't even told their dealerships about this and I told the dealer, 'you got to let your folks know,'" said Newman.

The Detroit Big 3 face this same problem, but it plays out the most with the Dodge muscle cars.

Police have documented this problem going back to 2018.

[CLOSE](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

"AT THIS POINT, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THE CUSTOMERS ARE AT THE MERCY OF THE CORPORATION FINALLY COMING UP WITH A FIX. AND IT'S NOT JUST THE CUSTOMERS WHO ARE THE VICTIMS, THE OTHER VICTIMS ARE THE PEOPLE THAT ARE VICTIMS OF THE CRASHES THAT OCCUR IN THE HIGH-SPEED CHASE SCENARIOS."

**BOB LANTZY**

ATTORNEY WITH BUCKFIRE & BUCKFIRE



"At this point the bottom line is the customers are at the mercy of the corporation finally coming up with a fix. And it's not just the customers who are the victims, the other victims are the people that are victims of the crashes that occur in the high speed chase scenarios," said Bob Lantzy, an attorney at Buckfire & Buckfire.

Newman points out that Stellantis in the March news release talks about the Dodge "brotherhood."

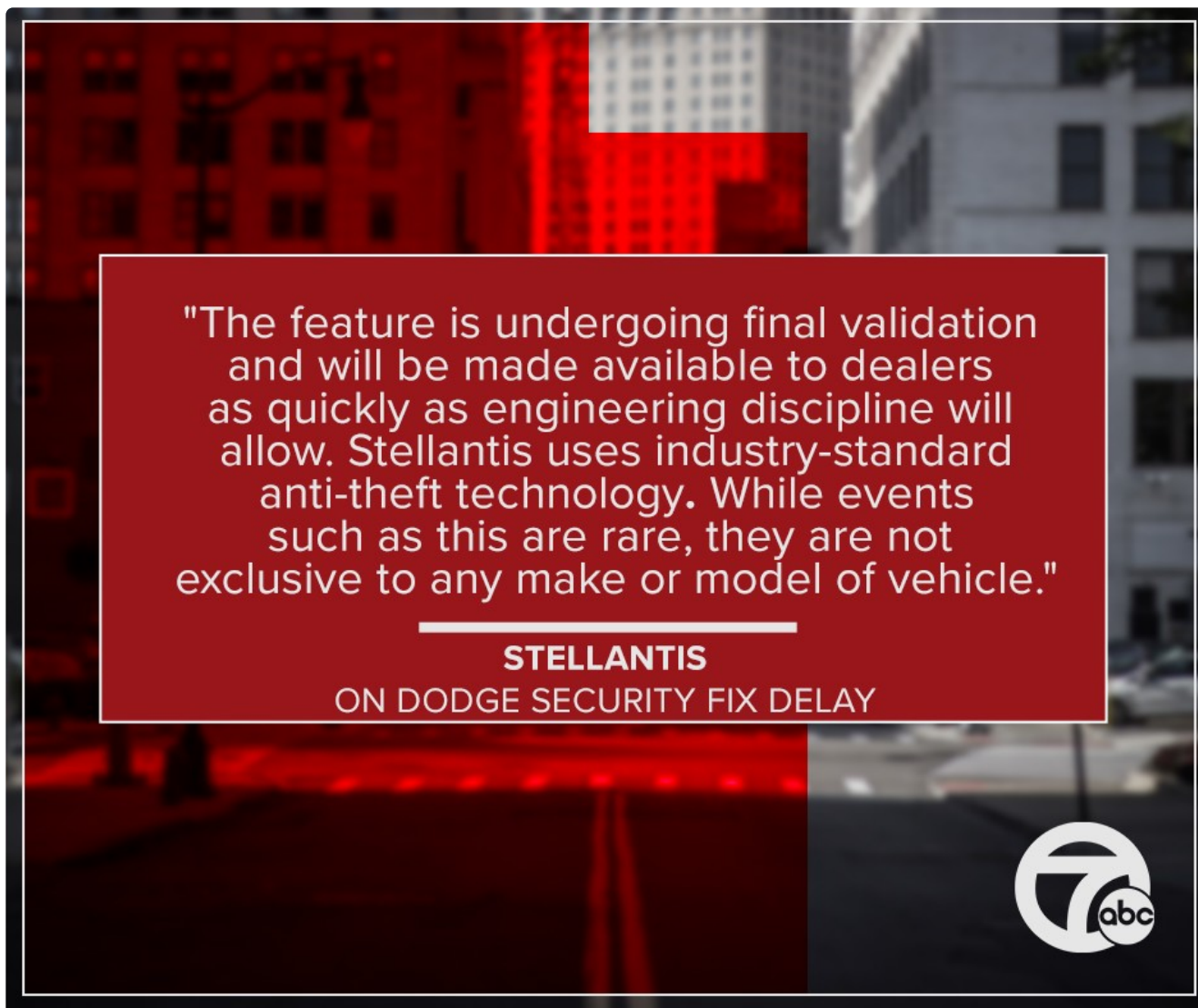
"More than 150 cars are stolen every day in the United States," added Kuniskis. "For any car owner, it's terrible, it's a hassle and it's a personal violation. Though statistically rare, car thieves have targeted the high-horsepower Dodge muscle cars, and we want the Dodge 'Brotherhood' to know we're taking quick action and covering their backs."

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT

*From the March press release.*

To which he says, "send out a little email, tell your dealers. How could you not do that when you're aware of something that could result in people dying, to be perfectly honest, because these cars in the wrong hands are lethal weapons."



We sent his comments to the company seeking a specific response about better communication. Stellantis sent us the following statement:

***"The feature is undergoing final validation and will be made available to dealers as quickly as engineering discipline will allow. Stellantis uses industry-standard anti-theft technology.***

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT



***While events such as this are rare, they are not exclusive to any make or model of vehicle."***

The National Insurance Crime Bureau has offered the following theft prevention tips for all vehicle owners:

1. *Common Sense — the common sense approach to protection is the easiest and most cost-effective way to thwart would-be thieves. You should always:*
  1. *Remove your keys from the ignition*
  2. *Lock your doors/close your windows*
  3. *Park in a well-lit area*
2. *Warning Device — the second layer of protection is a visible or audible device which alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular devices include:*
  1. *Audible alarms*
  2. *Steering column collars*
  3. *Steering wheel/brake pedal lock*
  4. *Brake locks*
  5. *Wheel locks*
  6. *Theft deterrent decals*
  7. *Identification markers in or on vehicle*
  8. *VIN etching*
  9. *Micro dot marking*
3. *Immobilizing Device — the third layer of protection is a device which prevents thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle. Some electronic devices have computer chips in ignition keys. Other devices inhibit the flow of electricity or fuel to the engine until a hidden switch or button is activated. Some examples are:*
  1. *Smart keys*
  2. *Fuse cut-offs*
  3. *Kill switches*
  4. *Starter ignition and fuel pump disablers*

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT

## 5. Wireless ignition authentication

*7. Tracking Device — the final layer of protection is a tracking device which emits a signal to police or a monitoring station when the vehicle is stolen.*

### *Tracking devices*

*are very effective in helping authorities recover stolen vehicles. Some systems employ “telematics” which combine GPS and wireless technologies to allow remote*

*monitoring of a vehicle. If the vehicle is moved, the system will alert the owner and the vehicle can be tracked via computer.*

Copyright 2021 Scripps Media, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Sign up for the **Rebound Newsletter** and receive up to date information.

## SPONSORED CONTENT

Recommended by

If You Need To Kill Time On Your Computer, This Vintage Game Is A Must-Have. No...  
Forge Of Empires

Tornadoes hit Oakland, Macomb and Genesee counties leaving miles of...

3 Silent Clues Your Cat Asks For Help  
Dr. Marty

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT



**Search WXYZ on your favorite streaming device!**

ADVERTISEMENT



Scripps Local Media  
© 2021 Scripps Media,  
Inc

[News](#) [Weather](#) [Detroit Traffic](#) [Sports](#) [Entertainment](#)  
[Marketplace](#) [Don't Waste Your Money](#) [Support](#)

[Sitemap](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Privacy Center](#)  
[Journalism Ethics Guidelines](#) [Terms of Use](#) [EEO](#) [Careers](#)  
[FCC Public File](#) [FCC Application](#) [Public File Contact](#)  
[Accessibility Statement](#) [Closed Captioning Contact](#)

CLOSE

ADVERTISEMENT