

## VIN #'s

Posted by OldInjun - 2010/06/03 16:00

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Some of the owners have expressed a concern about providing their car's VIN number at registration. While I respect their caution, I don't think VIN's are all that private to begin with - ever opened your hood at a well attended car show?

The purpose of any registry is to document surviving individual cars of a particular model. Since cars are identified by their VIN, what better way to register them? The VIN can also provide valuable historical data for people researching these cars. In my opinion, the value of having complete data on the registry outweighs the minor risk of someone misusing the info.

That being said, it is not our desire to force someone to disclose the VIN if it makes them uneasy. It also does not benefit the registry to have NO info on a surviving 2+2 because an owner refuses to register over this issue. So our current policy is to accept registrations without a complete VIN. I suggest entering XXXX for the last digits as a compromise - that should be enough of a "disguise".

I would like others to voice their opinions - maybe I'm missing some significant risk here. Other car registries routinely publish full VIN's, and I've not heard of any problems.

Please add your thoughts here, or vote in the poll on the Home Page.

Thanks!

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## Re:VIN #'s

Posted by 3x2plus2 - 2010/06/30 20:25

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I'm not sure of all the risks, so I played it safe and didn't register with a complete VIN.

One risk could be that with a vehicle description (and pictures) and VIN, someone could transform a Catalina into a 2+2 without a lot of investment and effort. With current technology, I doubt that it's difficult to copy a VIN plate. So PHS documentation would support it.

I think it's possible now to get close to a complete early Camaro, Firebird, Mustang, etc., with nearly all repro parts, starting with a body from Dynacorn. With a vehicle description and VIN, it might not be difficult to build a reasonable fake. I don't know how good the bodies are and whether they have intentional differences from the originals. And of course it would cost a fortune. So this is different from the situation with 2+2's, but I think interesting.

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## Re:VIN #'s

Posted by OldInjun - 2010/06/30 21:11

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I guess there's a risk to everything, but I still believe that the advantages of disclosing the VIN outweigh the risk. For one thing, if your car is recorded under your name on the Registry, it makes it harder for someone to "clone" it. If I were buying a 2+2, I'd go to the Registry to check out who owned it in the past, and contact them if possible. So a counterfeit car would easily be discovered. Documentation of a car's history is becoming increasingly important in the car hobby. Serious premiums

are being paid for car's based on the completeness of their documentation. Part of the impetus behind this site is the need for an easily accessible database which records all surviving 2+2's. The more vehicles registered, and the more complete the data on each, the more accurate the info. I foresee a day when 2+2 for sale will be advertised as "PHS and 2+2 Registry documented", thereby raising it's perceived value.

On the same note, I'm finding it difficult to understand why owners are reluctant to even disclose their location. I, for one, would love to know that fellow 2+2'er Joe Schmoe lives within an hour's drive of me. I'd call him up to compare notes, swap parts, and hopefully caravan to a local show together.

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## Re:VIN #'s

Posted by 3x2plus2 - 2010/07/01 18:55

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Documentation of history is compelling, but I'd still like to avoid the risk.

What if the counterfeit got registered first (if not here, somewhere else such as POCI)? Sure, with enough effort the counterfeit should be detectable. But the more a car is worth, the more effort will be put into making copies and the harder detection will be. I'd like to avoid the issue as much, and as early, as possible.

Have you considered hiding the VIN, just like street address, etc.? It would require addition of a mechanism to the website to query whether there is a match to an arbitrary VIN, to support the legitimate use. (And that would need protection against many queries in succession.)

If the VIN was encrypted, it could be handled just like a password. I throw that out because maybe the website design would more readily support that.

I agree that it can be useful to know location. Mine is posted. But I understand the concern for privacy.

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