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# OnStar debuts Stolen Vehicle Slowdown service



John Neff



OnStar debuted a new service today for its subscribers that allows the company to remotely slow down your vehicle if it's been stolen and the cops are in pursuit. Dubbed Stolen Vehicle Slowdown, the new technology works with the already available Stolen Vehicle Location Assistance to help police locate and then gradually slow down your vehicle in a chase. OnStar is able to remotely send a signal to your car's engine management system and reduce engine power gradually, so a person in the car will suddenly find the throttle



engine power gradually, so a perp on the run will suddenly find the throttle less and less responsive. It won't prevent the criminal from crashing your new CTS into a pole, but it will end a hot pursuit much quicker than the cops could do alone and therefore reduce the risk of a high-speed

accident that could injure innocent bystanders.

Stolen Vehicle Slowdown sounds pretty trick and certainly useful, but it is an additional service that will likely be available in an optional package, though OnStar didn't mention any pricing details.

Also, and perhaps we're just being paranoid, but it's a little unsettling to know that a service center rep in a cubicle somewhere has the ability to disable your engine at a moment's notice. We wonder if there's a slippery slope here that should be considered. For instance, can the service be used against the owner of the car who is paying for it? We can imagine a situation in which a divorced parent abducts his or her own child and takes off in a 2009 Malibu equipped with OnStar. The cops give pursuit and realize the car is equipped with OnStar. Could law enforcement then contact OnStar without the subscriber's permission if he or she is breaking the law and giving pursuit. It's something to think about before you subscribe and a question OnStar should answer before the case arises.

Stolen Vehicle Slowdown will start debuting on 2009 models, mostly Chevys, before it's rolled out across General Motors' entire vehicle lineup. It won't work on vehicle's using OnStar's analog network, only those that are on the digital network. Check out the press release after the jump to learn more about how it works.

[Source: OnStar]

## **PRESS RELEASE:**

### ***GM And OnStar Create Technology To Help Save Lives***

*New capability to assist OnStar subscribers and public safety officials in stolen vehicle cases*

*WASHINGTON D.C. (October 9, 2007) – General Motors (GM) and OnStar demonstrated today a prototype technology that can help OnStar further assist in the safe recovery of subscribers' stolen vehicles and reduce fatalities and injuries resulting from police chases. This new technology, known as Stolen Vehicle Slowdown, is the latest enhancement to OnStar's stolen vehicle service and can allow OnStar advisors working with law enforcement to send a signal to a subscriber's stolen vehicle to reduce engine power slowing the vehicle down gradually.*

*"From its inception, the motivation behind OnStar has been the safety and security of our subscribers and others on the road," said Chet Huber, OnStar president. "Every service we add builds on this original promise. The Stolen Vehicle Slowdown service will allow our subscribers added peace of mind by possibly preventing their vehicle from being used as an instrument of harm if it happens to be stolen."*

*According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics, about 30,000 police chases occur yearly and approximately 300 deaths occur as a result of those chases.*

*"Technology should not just entertain us or make us more comfortable, it should make us safer," said Nicole R. Nason, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "We applaud innovations such as the kind GM is embracing that will make our roads better, our passengers more protected and our drivers safer."*

*"We look forward to having technologies like Stolen Vehicle Slowdown available to aid our officers in apprehending suspected car thieves and keeping our officers, highways and citizens safe," said David Hiller, national vice president, Fraternal Order of Police. "Since 1996, OnStar has assisted the law enforcement community by helping to locate stolen vehicles."*

Powered by OnStar's newest generation of hardware (Generation 8), GM will make Stolen Vehicle Slowdown available on nearly 1.7 million Model Year (MY) 2009 vehicles. GM's largest division, Chevrolet, will be leading the way, making up for more than 60 percent of the total vehicles equipped with this new technology.

"Chevrolet aims to provide customers with more than they expect, and services like Stolen Vehicle Slowdown continue to add even more value to Chevy cars and trucks," said Ed Peper, general manager, Chevrolet. "Stolen Vehicle Slowdown will not only benefit GM and Chevy customers, but virtually everyone on the road."

Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is an enhancement to OnStar's Stolen Vehicle Location Assistance, which the company has offered to its subscribers since 1996. Stolen Vehicle Location Assistance uses Global Positioning Satellite technology to pinpoint the location of a vehicle that has been reported stolen. OnStar provides the location to law enforcement to assist with the vehicle's recovery. OnStar receives approximately 700 Stolen Vehicle Location Assistance requests from subscribers a month. The company has helped in 28,000 requests over the past decade.

"The IAFC sees this technology as an opportunity to improve the likelihood of a positive outcome for all involved in such dangerous road situations," said Chief Steven P. Westermann, President, International Association of Fire Chiefs. "On behalf of all firefighters, we appreciate the research and commitment of General Motors to tackle these issues and come up with a safe solution."

The process for Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is:

- Once the vehicle has been reported stolen to law enforcement, the subscriber can call OnStar and request Stolen Vehicle Location Assistance. OnStar will confirm the subscriber has not opted out of the Stolen Vehicle Slowdown service.
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- OnStar will use real-time GPS technology to attempt to pinpoint the exact location of the stolen vehicle and provide this information to law enforcement to help them recover the vehicle.
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- When law enforcement has established a clear line of sight of the stolen vehicle, law enforcement may request OnStar to slow it down remotely.
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- Safeguards will be in place to ensure that the correct vehicle is slowed down.

OnStar then sends a remote signal to the vehicle that interacts with the Powertrain system to reduce engine power which will slow the vehicle down gradually.

Research has shown that 95 percent of OnStar subscribers want the Stolen Vehicle Slowdown service available on their cars and trucks. OnStar subscribers have the choice to opt-out of the Stolen Vehicle Slowdown service at any time by contacting OnStar if they prefer not to have this capability on their vehicle. This will not affect the rest of their OnStar services.

OnStar's Stolen Vehicle Slowdown is a GM-exclusive feature in the U.S. and Canada and will be included in the one year OnStar subscription that customers receive when purchasing an eligible MY 2009 OnStar-equipped vehicle. OnStar's suite of services also includes Advanced Automatic Crash Notification, Emergency Services, Remote Door Unlock, Roadside Assistance, Crisis Assist, OnStar Turn-by-Turn Navigation, Hands Free Calling and OnStar Vehicle Diagnostics. For more information regarding OnStar's services, please visit [www.onstar.com](http://www.onstar.com).

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BEST ▼



**Anonymous**

7 Years Ago

Well the piece of crap Suburban I had was equipped with OnStar and I could see where the antenna cable connected at the top of the window. How hard is it to just cut that when you steal a GM and voila! no OnStar to track or control you!

0 ↑ ↓

Report Reply



**Anonymous**

7 Years Ago

I think you meant "walla"... :-)

0 ↑ ↓

Report Reply



**Anonymous**

7 Years Ago

My friends Escalade was jack left on bricks they took his 24's Tv's system etc....apparently drilled a whole thru the door to open the car and all this took place with the car equipped with Onstar lol....

So my take is, if there's any way criminals will find a way to override this new feature....

0 ↑ ↓

Report Reply



**Anonymous**

7 Years Ago

This looks like a good service and i hope it can only be activated by the car owner or anybody they designate to do so.

0 ↑ ↓

Report Reply

Anonymous

Why is it unsettling for Autoblog to think that when someone abducts a child, the police might be able to use this feature to stop the abductor?? Seems the opposite of unsettling to me. Settling, even.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

1984? or 2008? Maybe the vehicles will also slow down if you are screaming and banging on the wheel - shouting how you are going to kill the knicker who cut you off. Then the vibrating seats calm your crazy act down, and the in dash memory unit cues up some Enya or Yanni. Oh the justice!

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

All the more reason to disable the OnStar hardware when you buy a GM vehicle. Big Brother is watching, and we're paying him to do it!

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

Ahhhh yes. It's finally comming out from under the rug. Next they will turn this ability over to government to use when they see fit. The computer will track your speed, braking, seat belt use, and report it to law enforcement. They in turn will hit the little red kill switch, and you coast to a stop. "56MPH in a 55. Die you speeding dog!"

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

I agree with rskurtzer.

I will not be buying a car with OnStar or any type of similar service.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

All it takes is for a hacker to get into the Onstar network and cause mass slowdowns which could result in a lot more turmoil than you might think. If they're going to offer this level of control then they had better have some top notch security in place to prevent misuse by internal and external personnel.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

Just wait, they'll be slowing you down if you haven't paid your OnStar bill next. How awesome will that be?... the man is always watching you.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

My company is set to offer a device that the driver will activate in the event of a hi jacking that will shut the fuel off and the car will roll to a stop within 2 blocks of the hi jacking. it will also be activated when the ignition is shut off if the car is parked or stopped for the night. Only the owner or driver will know how to deactivate the device so the car will start and move again. There is no one other than the owner or driver who needs to know how to deactivate the system, no satalite or person at a desk somewhere in Thiland or Bankock will be able to take the running of your vehicle away from you. We have another device that will lock up the brakes in the event of a hi jacking. 30 seconds after you get out of the car and turn it over to the hi jacker they'll experience a total loss of motion and the car will come to a screeching halt. at this time most hi jackers will vacate the car and run away.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

If someone ever stole my car I would never want it back.  
What joyriders do to cars in this city would make you not want your car back either.

How about this, if someone steals my car I remotly shut down the engine and set off the airbag.

Or what I'd really want. The car fills with fire or some sort of poison.

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Report Reply

Anonymous

7 Years Ago

I have had OnStar since 2001(silverado sportside) and I love it, I use it often. I really like the new no hands calling, it works much better than a cell phone, just push the button and give the number and walla it rings. You pay for minutes in blocks that are good for 1 year, good deal. I have used mine for a flat tire, directions, lost, resturant, and the nearest emergency room.

It's the feature I like best on my New GMC SLT, extended cab, gorgeous, black on black, did I say gorgeous, pick-up.

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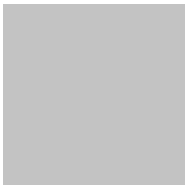
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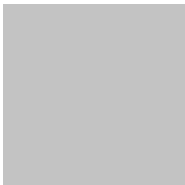
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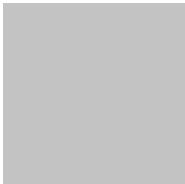
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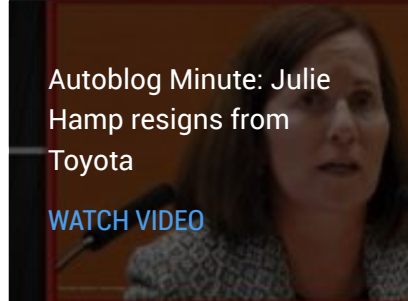
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