

THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

WANADA Bulletin # 12-25

December 17, 2025

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WANADA Remains National Leader in Combating Dealership Crime

WANADA has established itself as a national leader in combating dealership-related crimes—particularly fraud and theft—through proactive engagement with law enforcement and dealer education. During the early days of COVID, WANADA became the first dealer association in the country to launch a regular fraud and theft alert system, creating a vital communication link between dealership staff and regional investigators. These alerts, which continue today, have become a cornerstone of dealer security efforts and were recently featured in a presentation to the Washington Area Vehicle Enforcement (WAVE) task force.

The WAVE group is a multi-agency coalition of more than 50 investigators from DC, Maryland, and Virginia focused on dismantling organized auto-crime networks and sharing intelligence on emerging threats.

WANADA's inclusion in WAVE meetings underscores the Association's leadership in crime prevention. At a recent session, WANADA Vice President of Operations Joe Koch joined law enforcement officials to discuss the latest fraud tactics and prevention measures dealers can implement. **Several WANADA alerts were highlighted during the meeting**, reinforcing their value in real-world investigations. Koch has been instrumental in spearheading this initiative. In addition to leading WANADA's alert program, he now serves on the Board of the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), collaborating with senior law enforcement leaders on broader public safety issues. His role reflects WANADA's commitment to proactive engagement and dealer advocacy.



Top: WANADA Board Member Jim Willard of EuroMotorCars, MoCo Chief of Police Marc Yamada, and WANADA CEO John O'Donnell.
Bottom: WANADA VP of Operations Joe Koch with FCPD Assistant Chief of Police Bob Blakley.

Recent Dealer Advisory: Certificates of Origin

As emphasized in a recent WANADA Constant Contact communication, dealers are urged to exercise extreme caution when releasing certificates of origin. Fraudsters have increasingly targeted these documents to facilitate vehicle theft and title fraud. The advisory reminds dealers to verify all credentials before releasing a certificate and to report any suspicious requests immediately to WANADA and local authorities. This measure is critical because certificates of origin can be exploited to create fraudulent titles, enabling criminals to resell stolen vehicles or secure illegitimate financing.

To support this work, we are building a secure reference archive of authentic Certificates of Origin from every OEM. This database will be used exclusively for law enforcement training and fraud-detection purposes.

We are asking each of our willing members to provide a sample copy of a legitimate Certificate of Origin for every manufacturer you represent.

- Please redact all sensitive information, including VINs, customer data, dealer identifiers, or any other proprietary details.
- PDF format is preferred.

Please email redacted samples to: Joe Koch at jk@wanada.org.

Best Practices for Fraud Prevention

WANADA also encourages dealers to review the Colorado Department of Public Safety's comprehensive guide on fraud and theft prevention, which was highly touted at the recent WAVE meeting and offers practical steps to safeguard dealership operations. The guide—[available here](#)—covers essential topics such as identity verification, secure handling of sensitive documents, and recognizing patterns associated with organized crime. These best practices complement WANADA's alerts and provide actionable strategies for front-line staff.

Why This Matters

Dealership fraud and theft are not isolated incidents—they are often part of sophisticated, multi-state criminal enterprises. By maintaining strong communication channels between dealers and law enforcement, WANADA is helping to disrupt these networks and protect member businesses. The Association's leadership in this area has set a benchmark for dealer associations nationwide, proving that collaboration, education, and vigilance are the most effective tools in combating crime.

Auto Outlook Report for DC Region

Washington Area new retail registrations rose 3.4% year-to-date (YTD) through November 2025 to 202,715, even as October–November volumes ran 5.4% below the same period last year. Light trucks continued to power the market (+6.1% YTD), while car registrations declined 5.9%. Powertrain mix shifted notably: hybrids climbed to 19.6% share as gasoline fell to 63.2%, with BEVs easing to 12.2% and PHEVs holding at 3.1%. Toyota led with 16.8% market share,

followed by Honda (13.1%) and Ford (7.8%); among major brands, Hyundai surged 20% YTD while Tesla declined 19%.

For full details, including brand-by-brand performance and market share trends, download the complete report here: [Washington Area Auto Outlook – November 2025](#).

Don't Miss WANADA's Upcoming Events!

As we head into a busy and exciting season for the industry, WANADA is pleased to highlight three upcoming events designed to inform, connect, and engage our dealer and kindred-line members. From exclusive networking at the Washington, DC Auto Show to educational programming and national-level association collaboration, we encourage members to take advantage of these opportunities.

WANADA Member Reception @ The Washington, DC Auto Show

WANADA's dealer and kindred-line members are invited to attend the annual Member Reception at the Washington, DC Auto Show, taking place on Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 6:00–8:00 p.m. at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

The reception will be held during the Auto Show's Sneak Peek, which begins at 5:00 p.m. and offers attendees an exclusive opportunity to experience the show floor before it opens to the general public the following day. The Member Reception provides a relaxed setting for colleagues to reconnect, meet new industry partners, and enjoy the Auto Show in a members-only environment. The reception is generously sponsored by BG Crovato Products & Services and the Kirvan, Pierce, Sweeney Group.



Earlier that same day, members are also encouraged to participate in Public Policy Day, scheduled from 12:00–5:00 p.m. at the Convention Center. Public Policy Day brings together policymakers, regulators, and industry leaders for timely discussions on issues impacting automotive retail. Members may RSVP for Public Policy Day and avoid the \$25 registration fee by emailing Joe Koch at jk@wanada.org. Additional details about Public Policy Day are available [here](#).

Registration information for the Member Reception, along with additional details, will be distributed via email in the coming weeks.

Tag & Title Seminar at the Washington, DC Auto Show

The annual Tag & Title Seminar returns to the Washington, DC Auto Show next month, presented in partnership with the National Independent Vehicle Titling Agents (NIVTA). This highly regarded program is designed to facilitate direct interaction between tag & title agents and staff from regional motor vehicle agencies.

This year's seminar will feature confirmed participation from Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia, along with first-time participant Delaware DMV, expanding the scope and value of the program for attendees. The event provides a unique forum to discuss procedures, compliance issues, and best practices directly with agency representatives.

Current sponsors include Solera Vehicle Solutions, AutoData Direct, and The Chesapeake Bay Trust. Registration is now open, and full details are available on the event flyer, which members may also download from the WANADA website. Kindred-line members interested in sponsorship opportunities may contact Beth Caro at beth@nivta.org.

Tri-Association Reception at the NADA Show

WANADA will once again join with our sister associations, the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association (MADA) and the Virginia Automobile Dealers Association (VADA), to host a Tri-Association Reception during the NADA Show in Las Vegas.

The reception will be held on February 5, 2025, from 5:00–7:00 p.m. in the Pomerol Room at The Wynn. This is a casual, come-and-go event and a popular opportunity for Mid-Atlantic dealers and partners to gather while attending NADA.

The event is generously sponsored by Amazon Autos, Armatus Dealer Uplift, CBM, TrueCar, Cox Automotive, JM&A, Penney Design Group, Accumatic, Truist, Rifkin Weiner Livingston, Performance Brokerage Services, and Reynolds & Reynolds. Members may register in advance using the event registration link [here](#).



For questions about any of these events, or to ensure you are receiving WANADA event communications, please contact the WANADA office. We look forward to seeing you in the weeks ahead.

Maryland MVA Updates

Our friends at Maryland MVA have provided the following updates:

Vehicle Services - Tips & Reminders

- The Affidavit in Lieu of a Title form ([VR-449A](#)) is to be used when the current Maryland title is not available, but a previous Maryland title was submitted to the dealer. The form must be accompanied by the older Maryland title and cannot be submitted as an ownership document alone. If it is submitted without the Maryland title, the customer will not receive a new title. This form will not be allowed if the previous title state was an out-of-state title.
- All questions pertaining to Glen Burnie Branch portal requests can be submitted to the email box MDDTTS@mdot.maryland.gov. All other branches can be reached at the email addresses provided on a forthcoming bulletin later this month.
- Customers who are 100% disabled veterans will be mailed a permanent non-expiring registration card and black registration sticker for any plate they are issued. If you are transferring a plate for a 100% disabled veteran, please make sure the customer submits the most recent registration card with the registration expiration date of 12/31/9999.

Business Licensing & Compliance Updates

- The MVA is working on additional enhancements to dealer transactions that involve Trade-Ins. In the near future, there will be two new required fields that must be addressed with every Trade-In. All ERT vendors have been given the technical requirements needed for this update. We do not yet have an exact date of this change, but we anticipate it being sometime in January. The two new required fields are listed below:
 - The Book value of the Trade-In vehicle
 - A note/written explanation as to why the Trade-In was given that value.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What are the MVA requirements regarding Power of Attorneys?**
 - The MVA recommends a power of attorney, either the VR-279 (dealers – order via the Warehouse) or [VR-470 \(T&T\)](#), be completed and uploaded for all title and registration transactions if the dealer or title service is signing or picking up title work on behalf of a customer or entity.
- **Can dealers transfer plates from an original lease to a lease buyout transaction via ERT?**
 - Currently the ability to transfer plates from a lease to a lease buyout is not available for standard plates but MVA development is working on a solution. Both organizational and vanity plates can be transferred if a permission letter from the leasing company is attached.
- **What use type should be used if loaner vehicle is not an option with my ERT vendor?**
 - The loaner use type is available on all ERT vendor systems
- **How do you reply to a pending rejection in the portal?**
 - Once you receive a pending rejection notification on your portal account, there is a reply option as well as an attachment link on the bottom right side of the screen to submit any missing information or documentation to the submitted transaction.
- **Why are duplicate titles printing incorrect names or omitting the co-buyer's name?**
 - The MVA is aware of this issue and has our development team working to rectify the issue.
- **How can you apply for a duplicate title on the portal if there is not a trade in but a purchase from a customer?**
 - Currently, the MVA development team are in the second phase of the duplicate title process enhancement, and we plan to allow a dealer to order a duplicate title without the trade-in requirement.

If you have a topic, you'd like us to cover in a future newsletter, please send it to Kristin Orlando-Dillahunt at korlando@mdot.maryland.gov.

SoberRide Holiday Campaign Kicks Off

The Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) will again operate its Holiday SoberRide® campaign nightly from 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m., December 19, 2025 through January 1, 2026, helping keep local roads safe during one of the highest-risk periods for impaired driving.

During the campaign, area residents age 21 and older may use the Lyft app and enter the SoberRide® promo code to receive a free ride home (up to \$15). The nightly code will be posted at 9:00 p.m. on December 19 and December 31 at www.SoberRide.com. Service is available throughout Lyft's Washington, DC-area coverage, including the District, much of suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia.

WANADA is proud to serve as a sponsor of SoberRide® and encourages dealer members to help promote the program as part of our shared commitment to traffic safety and responsible driving during the holiday season.



This Holiday Season, don't drink and drive!
Designate a sober driver or use WRAP's SoberRide® powered by Lyft!

SoberRide®

Get a FREE Lyft ride home (up to \$15) this holiday season
Visit www.SoberRide.com for code
Limited quantities available

Enter the code in the app's 'Payment' tab under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option. Valid for up to \$15 off one ride taken home in Lyft's Washington D.C. coverage area, nightly from 10:00 p.m. Friday, December 19, 2025 until 4:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 1, 2026. You must be 21 years or older to use this service. Subject to Lyft's Terms of Service. Valid for new and existing Lyft users while supplies last. The SoberRide® codes will be released to the public at 9:00 p.m. on Friday, December 19th and Wednesday the 31st and can be used only during the aforementioned periods.

2025 EXECUTIVE SOBERRIDE® SPONSORS:	2025 GOLD SOBERRIDE® SPONSORS:	2025 SILVER SOBERRIDE® SPONSORS:	2025 PUBLIC PARTNER SOBERRIDE® SPONSORS:
 ENJOY RESPONSIBLY. DRINK WISER.  	    	      	  

Some restrictions apply. See www.SoberRide.com for further details or call WRAP at 703.893.0461.

Limited quantities available. Valid for new and existing Lyft users who are 21 years of age or older. One offer per user. Valid for up to \$15 off one (1) ride taken home in Lyft's Washington, D.C. coverage area nightly from 10:00 p.m. Friday, December 19, 2025 until 4:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 1, 2026. Discount does not apply to cancellation fees, damage charges or taxes. No cash value. May not be sold, transferred or combined with other offers. Subject to Lyft's Terms of Service.

SoberRide® is a registered trademark of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).

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