



The Scrap Recycling Industry: On the Front Lines of Stopping Materials Theft

Materials theft has become an overwhelming problem around the world. Its impact on the scrap recycling industry is significant. Recyclers have become both the victims of theft and the target for well intentioned, but ineffective legislative efforts to solve the theft problem. **ISRI, the nation's trade association for the scrap recycling industry**, is actively working to help **solve the problem of materials theft** and, as part of this effort, provides members and community leaders with helpful resources that they can use when facing this issue.

"Without the assistance of the ISRI Theft Alert system, the arrest of two for burglary and larceny would have not occurred and the case would have gone unsolved."

LT. MARSHALL PORTER
Farmington Police Dept., Unionville, CT

- No legitimate scrap dealer wants to intentionally take stolen goods. Materials theft hurts us and hurts our industry.
- ISRI has established a nationwide theft alert system, the first of its kind, available to every law enforcement agency in the country. The theft alert system has been praised by police departments around the country. In one region alone (Macon, Georgia) ISRI's cooperative efforts with law enforcement resulted in a drop in metal theft from approximately 80 reports in December of 2006 to under 10 reported thefts today.
- In addition to the theft alert system, ISRI has been at the forefront in combating materials theft by bringing together all affected stakeholders, including scrap recyclers, law enforcement, local industry, and community leaders.
- To battle the issue of materials theft, ISRI recommends the following practices:
 - Requiring photo identification for every retail transaction and recording the license plate of the vehicle the seller is driving;

Keeping good records so information can be provided on materials should police suspect that materials have been stolen;

Keeping a list of suspicious materials and consistently questioning the ownership of these materials if they are brought to a scrap recycling facility;

When paying cash for a transaction, requiring the seller's signature on a receipt for each transaction and including a certification on the receipt that the seller is the owner or authorized seller of the materials;

Utilizing security video systems with time stamps to help track transactions;

Requiring a contract or letter of authorization for the purchase of certain item such as new production scrap, manhole covers, guardrails, historical marks, certain cables used only in high-voltage transmission lines, etc.;

Training of employees on how to identify suspicious materials.

- In addition, ISRI is working with contractors, farmers, utilities and other victims of property theft to assist in materials theft prevention efforts and helping to better identify stolen materials.

- ISRI has joined with the National Crime Prevention Council (McGruff® the Crime Dog and "Take a Bite Out of Crime®") in a joint effort to communicate with law enforcement and with crime prevention organizations around the country about the urgent need for comprehensive efforts to solve this problem.



- ISRI supports legislation incorporating the concepts listed above that effectively deal with the issues surrounding materials theft. Laws requiring legitimate businesses to "tag & hold" are onerous to the businesses and have been singularly ineffective in fighting materials theft. In the end, partnerships are far more effective than mandates.



ISRI

Voice of the Recycling Industry

Institute of
Scrap Recycling
Industries, Inc.