

Welcome to this edition of BOLO News. BOLO News is a monthly newsletter for law enforcement subscribers of [ScrapTheftAlert.com](http://ScrapTheftAlert.com) to share success stories and other information that may be pertinent in the ongoing fight against metals theft.

## Copper Theft Prevention

As previously cited in BOLO News, copper theft is often a crime of opportunity. The prevalence of copper at utility substations, construction sites, and home and business locations makes it an attractive target for thieves. Couple that with the challenge of identifying stolen copper wire and pipe and it is not difficult to understand how the reward can outweigh the risk for thieves. Still, there are preventive measures property and business owners can take to minimize the opportunity for theft and assist law enforcement and recyclers in identifying materials if a theft does occur. Crime prevention officers and officers responding to reports of metals theft should be able to provide tips to communities experiencing metals theft. Below are some tips for common stolen items and situations officers might consider passing on.

1. **Encourage home owners to keep garage doors closed and crawl spaces secured**, preventing access to pipes and wires. Property and home owners can enclose air conditioning units in locked wire cages and/or spray paint the interior copper tubing. For industrial size units, alarm products are available that can detect cuts in electricity and/or monitor changes in the pressure of the refrigerant. Clamped cages are available to protect catalytic converters. Remember, the higher a vehicle sits off the ground, the easier it is to access the catalytic converter.
2. **Remind contractors to keep construction materials in secured fenced-in areas.** Have them consider hiring security, at least during the phase of construction involving installation of copper pipes and wiring. If possible, they can limit on-hand supplies to what will be needed in the short term. Products as simple and cheap as spray paint can be used to mark materials for identification.
3. **Public utilities can consider resistance perimeter fencing and surveillance cameras.** Company logos can be stamped or painted on materials for easier identification. Signage should be considered to warn potential thieves of dangers of electricity and that materials have been marked for identification.
4. **Other commercially available products such as intrusion alarms, video, engraving devices, and microdot technology can be used to thwart copper**



## Reader Poll

Have you been called upon to provide metals theft prevention tips whether in a community meeting forum or during an investigation?

- A.) Yes  
B.) No

**VOTE**

Last month we asked readers, "Does your jurisdiction take into account damages as well as value when considering metals theft cases for prosecution?"

Here are the results:

Yes	76%
No	12%
Not Sure	12%

**theft.** By making theft more difficult and increasing the likelihood of detection should a theft occur, property owners, communities, and law enforcement can lessen the instances and impact of metals theft.

### ScrapTheftAlert Success Story

One suspect was arrested and approximately 20,000 lbs of copper buss bars and wire recovered as the result of an alert issued on November 10, 2014, by AT&T Security. The alert was for approximately 50 lbs of stolen copper materials valued at \$5,000 from facilities in Goodlettsville, TN. On November 26, 2014, Southern Recycling, Inc., of Bowling Green, KY, contacted Bowling Green Police after recognizing stolen property based on the AT&T alert. Further investigation by the Goodlettsville Police Department tied the suspect to 25 thefts in multiple Tennessee jurisdictions and the recovery of the additional copper materials.

### In the News

[Caltrans Working to Repair Lights Damaged by Metal Thieves](#)

ABC30.com, January 13, 2015

[Gloucester Township Police Halt Scrap Metal Theft in Progress](#)

NJ.com, January 13, 2015

[Coshocton Co Copper Theft Causes Power Outage](#)

NBC4i.com, January 9, 2015

### Questions?

Contact ISRI Director of Law Enforcement Outreach [Brady Mills](#) or call (202) 662-8526 for more information.



Voice of the Recycling Industry

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