

January 2016

Welcome to this edition of BOLO News. BOLO News is a monthly newsletter for law enforcement to share success stories and other information that may be pertinent in the ongoing fight against metals theft.

## Getting the Most Out of ScrapTheftAlert.com in Investigations

[ScrapTheftAlert.com](#) (STA) has proven to be an effective tool in the fight against metals theft; when it is used, that is. First and foremost, it is a free tool provided by the recycling industry, through ISRI, to combat metals theft. Registration and submission of alerts is easy and recyclers using the system need not be ISRI members. The ability to upload photographs of stolen items is an additional asset aiding law enforcement and recyclers in identifying stolen materials. However, it is not uncommon for the administrator of the STA system to read of occurrences of metals theft in the media only to find recyclers were never immediately notified of the theft via an alert broadcast through STA. This being the case even when the investigating police department has officers registered with the system.

The STA Success Story cited in last month's BOLO News is a prime example of the timely effectiveness of STA and is worth repeating:

On November 17, 2015, the Calhoun County, MI, Sheriff's Department issued an alert for 870 pounds of brass and copper valued at \$1,700, stolen from a recycling yard in Springfield, MI. Within 20 minutes of the alert broadcast, workers at OmniSource in Auburn, IN, recognized the stolen material from the alert and contacted authorities, culminating in the arrest of two suspects. The arrests resulted from excellent cooperation and communication between OmniSource; the Auburn, IN, Police Department; and the Calhoun County, MI, Sheriff's Department.

The STA system has an added attribute which cannot be quantified by value of property recovered or number of arrests made. Users of STA who submit alerts receive a subsequent four-question email from the system asking for feedback. Users can voluntarily respond to the push-button questionnaire advising if the case was resolved, if property was recovered, if any arrests were made, and if the alert was useful. Oftentimes, feedback is received indicating "no" to the first three questions, but advising that "yes" the alert was useful.

ISRI conducted an unofficial survey, contacting more than a dozen reporting officers by telephone and email asking why they indicated the alert was useful when cases were not resolved, no arrests were made nor any property recovered. Each responded that even though their specific alert did not resolve a case, STA is an excellent intelligence tool; it lets officers know what materials are being stolen in neighboring communities, in what quantities, and from what



The Scrap Recycling Industry's Neighborhood Watch

VISIT



## Reader Poll

Do you agree that STA can be an effective intelligence tool in the fight against metals theft?

[VOTE](#)

Last month we asked readers: **Have you been involved in an investigation in which metals thieves were operating in "plain sight?"**

Here are the results:

Yes	93%
No	7%
Undetermined	0%

## In the News

[Beekman Man Accused of Stealing Copper from NYSEG, Central Hudson and a Cell Tower](#)  
NY1, January 19, 2016

locations. This allows officers to be on alert in their own communities and perhaps prevent thefts.

For users of STA reading this column, encourage co-workers to register with the system. STA has proven effective and more users will add to the success of the system, whether in cleared cases or in crime prevention.

## Recent ScrapTheftAlert.com Success Stories

Feedback recently received on two alerts broadcast in September and October, illustrate the value of STA, especially when photographs are attached. The first, submitted by the Newport, MN Police for the theft of 5,000 feet of copper tracer wire, and the latter by the Union Pacific Railroad Police, in Pueblo, CO, for the theft of 15 brown steel plates, were both cleared by arrests with assistance from local recyclers.

[Two Arrests Made in Theft of Copper Wiring from Tulsa Street Lights](#)

TulsaWorld, January 15, 2016

[Copper Thieves Force Closure of Villa West Businesses](#)

WIBW, January 13, 2016

## Questions?

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



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