



2018 RESOLUTIONS

Adopted November 2018

Reducing Metal Theft

Submitted by: Crime Prevention Committee

Co-sponsored by: Private Sector Liaison Committee and Police Investigative Operations
Committee
CPC.05.t2018

WHEREAS, U.S. Senate Resolution 252, dated November 16, 2011, recognized the scrap recycling industry as a manufacturing industry critical to the future of U.S.; and ¹

WHEREAS, the scrap recycling industry has made a concerted effort to work with law enforcement on metals theft by forming a Law Enforcement Advisory Council, conducting metals theft workshops, and providing other educational materials; and ²

WHEREAS, a continuing comprehensive strategy combining the efforts of law enforcement, community leaders, and the scrap recycling industry is necessary to prevent metals theft and prosecute those responsible for metal theft; and

WHEREAS, prompt notification of stolen materials to recyclers is imperative, and timely notifications enhance recyclers' level of vigilance for stolen materials; and

WHEREAS, in most theft cases, the costs to repair damages done by thieves to infrastructure to convert stolen metals far exceeds the value of the metals, and in 2009 the U.S. Department of Energy estimated the replacement cost of copper to public utilities was about one-fifth the cost of the final repair; and ³

WHEREAS, in 2017, the National Insurance Crime Bureau's (NICB) annual report analyzing metals theft claims cited positive correlation between price of copper and the number of theft claims. ⁴ Copper prices fluctuate and are subject to market conditions; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of crime data specific to metals theft, law enforcement officials oftentimes rely on insurance theft claims to assess criminal activity, which while accurate as to insurance claims, carry the potential to miscalculate the number of crimes that are committed with respect to metals theft; and

¹ U.S. Senate. (n.d.). *S. Res. 251 (2011)*. Washington DC

² Burnett, Kussainov, Hull. (2014). *Scrap Metal Theft: Is Legislation Working for States?* Lexington, KY: The Council of State Governments

³ Office of Electricity and Energy Reliability, U.S. Department of Energy. (2010). *An Assessment of Copper Wire Thefts from Electric Utilities*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Energy

⁴ NICB. (2017). *Metal Theft Claims from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2016*. Des Plaines, IL: National Insurance Crime Bureau

WHEREAS, without specific crime data, police agencies cannot accurately analyze the location of the thefts, establish timetables to create crime patterns, or the types of targeted metals. The dearth of information makes it difficult for police to focus their efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI) provides an online portal theft alert system and database known as <http://www.scraptheftalert.com> at no cost to law enforcement agencies, victims of metal theft, property owners, and corporate security, to assist in the identification and investigation of stolen material and partnered with the Canadian Association of Recycling Industries (CARI) to make the site available in the U.S. and Canada. The more than 19,600 alerts posted to this portal have resulted in numerous successes leading to the identification of suspects and the recovery of more than \$2.8 million in stolen material; and

WHEREAS, all 50 US States have metals theft laws; whereby, six states require recyclers to receive theft alerts from ScrapTheftAlert.com: California, Colorado, Michigan, New Mexico, Ohio, and Washington.⁵ The database is available as a service provider on the Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) and Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP) networks; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers may not be aware of the significance or existence of the theft alert system nor are they fully aware of how to access information that is in the theft alert system database. Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) calls upon all Law Enforcement agencies to recognize scrap metal recyclers as partners; take advantage of law enforcement specific tools and resources developed by ISRI; and disseminate metals theft prevention techniques through community crime prevention programs; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, the IACP encourages all Law Enforcement agencies to use the web-based scrap metal theft alert system which can be accessed at <http://www.ScrapTheftAlert.com> or other web-based sites that are globally available to alert recyclers of stolen scrap metals.

⁵ ISRI. (2017, August 18). *State Metal Theft Statutes*. Retrieved December 21, 2017, from ISRI.org: www.isri.org/docs/default-source/state-specific-policy-resources/state-metals-theft-statutes.pdf?sfvrsn=40