

*Floridians for*

# Copper

and

# Metal Crime Prevention

*A Coalition to  
Stop Secondary  
Metal Theft*



## The Metal Theft Epidemic

**A**ll across Florida, and the rest of the nation, residents and businesses are being targeted by a growing group of criminals ... metal thieves and resellers. Due to the increasing worldwide demand for metals, more and more criminals are stealing copper wiring from construction sites, digging up underground telecommunication wires, cutting utility wires and even stealing beer kegs!

Sought after metal can be found just about anywhere and most of it is unguarded. Homes, churches, businesses and industries like construction, telecommunications, utilities, agriculture and beer are being victimized every day. The metal demand in China and India has surged, causing prices everywhere to peak.

## Stolen Metal Sales on the Rise

Theft is just part of the problem. Unscrupulous metals dealers who are willing to resale the stolen property are adding to the demand and supporting criminal activity.

- Thieves can easily sell copper wire and other metals at scrap yards across the state for \$1.50 to \$3 a pound
- In three years, beer kegs scrap value has gone from \$5 per keg to over \$40 per keg
- Florida isn't alone – each year copper and other metal thefts amount to \$1 billion in the U.S.

## “Hot Wire” Crimes

- A school electrical supervisor allegedly stole \$271,000 worth of copper wiring from the Broward County School District
- The City of Orlando has had over 200 separate incidents of metal theft in the first 6 months of this year, the city anticipates close to 500 total robberies for the year
- Approximately \$200 in copper metal theft may cost a Seminole Heights church \$50,000 to repair
- Two suspects removed the ground wires on 177 transmission structures between Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Counties, jeopardizing the safety of dozens of employees, contractors and community members
- The local telecommunications company for Baker County had over 1600 feet of aerial cable stolen; replacement costs are close to \$27,000

## Metal Theft ... A Deadly Danger

Stealing wire from utility sites can cause power outages and surges or even worse. If phone wires are ripped from the ground, a person with an emergency may be unable to reach help. If utility wires are cut, electricity will not reach the home of an ill person who uses a medical device. Additionally, an innocent person may come into contact with equipment that has been damaged by metal thieves, potentially causing injury or death.

### Public Safety Legislation: *Saving Lives and Preventing Metal Theft*

Thirteen states now have laws to help stop secondary metal theft. In Florida, Rep. Baxter Troutman (HB 105), Rep. Scott Randolph (HB 113), Sen. Lee Constantine (SB 556) and Sen. Victor Crist (SB 748) have filed bills to help to deter this growing and costly problem.

This public safety legislation aims to crack down on theft by requiring secondary metal dealers to keep records including:

- Name and/or description of person from whom the goods were acquired
- Address and workplace
- Home and work phone numbers
- A thumbprint
- Vehicle information and photograph
- Videotape or digital image of the regulated metals being sold

These precautionary actions will help deter thieves from bringing stolen items to a legitimate secondary metal dealer. Those unscrupulous metal dealers who do not provide the required information and receive stolen property can be charged with a felony of the third degree!

## Coalition Members

Alarm Association of Florida  
Anheuser-Busch Companies  
Asphalt Contractors Association of Florida  
Associated Builders & Contractors of Florida  
Associated Industries of Florida  
AT&T  
Beer Industry of Florida  
Embarq  
Florida Associated General Contractors  
Florida Association of Electrical Contractors  
Florida Building Material Association  
Florida Electric Cooperatives Association  
Florida Farm Bureau  
Florida Home Builders Association  
Florida Municipal Electric Association  
FP&L  
Florida Swimming Pool Association  
Florida Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Contractors Association  
Florida Roofing, Sheet Metal & Air Conditioning Contractors Association  
Florida Fire Sprinkler Association  
Florida Wall & Ceiling Contractors Association  
Florida Telecommunications Industries Association  
Florida Transportation Builders Association  
Gulf Power  
Independent Electrical Contractors of Florida  
Miller Brewing  
TECO  
Underground Utility Contractors of Florida  
Verizon

For more information contact:

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