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Brief History of Scrap Metal Theft Cooperation and Legislation

September 14, 2021

- Sponsor, Senator Jon J. Greiner (2007-2010) – Also Chief of Police for Ogden City
- Main Legislation passed in 2007 General Session SB 44
- Metal Theft was a huge issue. (Mainly stolen for money for drugs)
- Scrap Metal Recycling Industries and Law Enforcement were heavily involved in the passage of this legislation
- Kicking off this legislation took extra effort
- Cooperation between affected entities
 - Prosecutor's needs: (Fred Burmeister – Deputy District Attorney)
 - Concrete evidence that the intent of the seller was to sell metal that they claimed was their property that they owned
 - Law Enforcement needs:
 - How do they figure out where stolen metal is being sold?
 - Detailed information of what the seller sold so they can give that information to the prosecutors
 - Scrap Metal Recyclers needs:
 - Stolen items to look for
 - Where it was stolen from
 - Who to call?
- Notification system developed during meetings held downtown SLC at the Salt Lake County Attorney's offices in 2008. West Jordan Police volunteered to have Nikol Mitchell receive and send emails. Emails started in June of 2008.
 - When a case is opened Detectives send it to Nikol if it is metals related
 - Nikol scrubs for info not needed to Metal Recycling Industries
 - **Send to Scrap Metal Businesses**
 - Businesses notify employees on what to watch for

- Businesses call Detectives if they see anything suspicious
- **Reverse history checks** for Law Enforcement, email asking for history with specific information requested. Name, DOB, DL# or UT ID, Photos, if possible, of suspect and vehicle
- Information meetings held in Salt Lake County, Utah county and Weber County with all Law Enforcement and all Scrap Metal Businesses across the state. Everyone invited
- Approximate numbers of emails sent to Scrap Metal Businesses by Year:
 - 100 from June 2008 to end of the year
 - 120 - 2009
 - 180 – 2010 – Per May presentation from AG’s office (110 stolen “CATS”
 - 220 – 2011
 - 160 – 2012
 - 120 – 2013
 - 100 - 2014
 - 70 - 2015
 - 50 - 2016
 - 19 – 2017
 - 25 – 2018
 - 19 – 2019
 - 23 – 2020 – Per May presentation from AG’s office (654 stolen “CATS”
 - 16 – 2021 to September 14, 2021 – Per May presentation over 300 “CATS” stolen to date of May Interim
- The 14 of the 16 2021 notifications to Recyclers were requests for information from.
 - Utah Transit Authority – 3 (All Attempts to identify suspects using vehicle pictures and people pictures)
 - Centerville Police – 4 (Search for identifying information on specific suspects on stolen “CATS”, Air conditioning unit, Specific information on two suspects for water backflow preventors, “CATS”, BMW rims)
 - Salt Lake City Police Department (copper piping)
 - Tooele -4 (Check for specific individuals involved in stolen “CATS”, wire, sprinkler pipes)
 - City of South Jordan (copper wire)
 - University of Utah Police (copper pipe, brass fittings)

Hitches in the system set up in 2008

- New Metal Businesses that Nikol was not made aware of
- Changes in assignments among Law Enforcement
- JRI – (Thieves not being arrested, jailed or prosecuted) (Not enough substance abuse treatment facilities) (Can't keep them in the facilities) (Law Enforcement office across the state need more officers)
- Scrap Metal Recyclers slacked off on collecting all of the information when notifications slowed down and when COVID-19 became an issue.
- Training for Law Enforcement on new assignments to send info to Nikol.
- Turnover is high
- Law enforcement employees are not usually made detective until they have a few years of experience or more.

Meeting with the AG's office March 10th, 2021

- AG's office reviewed the Scrap Metal Recycling Laws and enforcement on State Code that relates to this industry.
- I believe we have come full circle in about 13 years. Back to high drug use, theft and a system that is not functioning as efficient as it should.
- It's time to kick this off again

Suggestions for getting us back on track:

- Database specific to Scrap Metal Industry for stolen "cats"
- Database needs to be two-way entry
- Only require entry into the database of catalytic converters purchased from individuals who do not have a business relationship with the industry.
 - Not needed for businesses that repair "cats"
 - Not needed for Scrap Peddlers who travel around the entire State to individual repair shops and wrecking yards especially in rural areas of the state. They buy scrap parts, including scrap catalytic converts from those businesses and then bring them to a recycler who will purchase them.
 - No need to enter the information for an individual who brings in the "cat" from their own car that they had replaced if they can show the registration or title of the car to the recycler and they match the drivers license of the individual.

- Law enforcement enters information on stolen “cats” for the Recyclers so they will know what to look for if an individual comes into their business with a suspect “CAT”
- Recyclers will then know who to call if they see the stolen merchandise.