



Public Safety Advisory

Theft of Recycling Materials

Theft of Recycling Materials

Recycling materials are being stolen at an increasing rate in San Francisco and around the Bay Area. Materials range from copper wire and pipe to auto parts, to curbside recycling materials to even decorative park and yard fixtures. You can avoid theft by taking measures such as these:

- Park your vehicle inside whenever possible, use a steering wheel lock and/or alarm system if possible.
- Consider etching your driver's license number on parts that have been targeted by recyclers, such as the catalytic converter.
- When re-piping or remodeling, have pipes and/or wire installed in the interior of your building or home.
- Paint, insulate or firmly secure existing pipes and wires in several places to make it difficult for theft.
- Decorative outdoor metallic fixtures should be securely fastened, bolted or cemented.
- Wait until the morning of scheduled pick up to put out recyclable materials
- Lock or secure dumpsters and bins when possible

Theft of Curbside Recyclables

Recycling poachers look for items of value such as aluminum cans, bottles and personal information. This crime problem has a far-reaching and negative impact on neighborhood public safety, the environment and consumer recycling efforts. As a result, you and your neighbors are exposed to increased noise, litter and possible trespassing on private property.

Taking recyclables is in violation of local and state law. Municipal Health Code Sec. 293.1 states that it shall be unlawful for any person other than an authorized City employee or the City's authorized curbside recycling program collectors to take, remove, move or otherwise appropriate the container in which recyclable materials are placed for collection and the matters contained therein. Upon conviction, a person is subject to the following penalty:

- Infraction - fine not exceeding \$250.00 for the 1st offense. 2nd or additional offense by a fine of not less than \$100 or not exceeding \$250.
- Misdemeanor - a person can be punished by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding \$500, or both.

You and your neighbors can prevent the theft of recyclables by:

- ♻ Placing your recyclables on the curb by 6 am the day of pick-up.
- ♻ Shred paper with personal information.
- ♻ Organize a **SAFE Neighborhood Watch** on your block and communicate with your neighbors and the police regularly. Call **SAFE** at (415)553-1984.
- ♻ **Never confront or stop poachers!** If they are aggressive or threaten your safety, call 9-1-1
- ♻ Observe and report recycling poachers to the SFPD by calling (415)553-0123.
- ♻ Call Sunset Scavenger at (415) 330-1300 or Golden Gate Disposal & Recycling at (415) 626-4000 during business hours to report the theft of recyclables.
- ♻ Report online at http://www.sunsetscavenger.com/recycling_theft.htm