



Metropolitan Pima Alliance

PRESS RELEASE
May 8, 2013

For Immediate Release
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Metropolitan Pima Alliance

Governor Passes State Law to Combat Metal Theft Supported by Pima County Metal Watch



The state of Arizona has strengthened laws to fight metal theft - an effort assisted by the Metropolitan Pima Alliance working with state legislators, utilities and scrap metal dealers.

Gov. Jan Brewer last week signed two bills into law that address the widespread problem of metal theft in Arizona and nationwide.

House Bill 2262 will require scrap metal dealers to register with the Arizona Department of Public Safety and would increase penalties for dealers who knowingly purchase stolen materials. Senate Bill 1107 makes it illegal for anyone to purchase or even possess a metal known to be stolen. Earlier in April, Brewer signed into law House Bill 2386, authored by Rep. Justin Pierce, R-Mesa, expanding the definition of criminal damage to include tampering with utility property to obtain scrap metal. The bills go into effect on Aug. 2.

Amber Smith, executive director of the Metropolitan Pima Alliance (MPA) and co-chair of the Pima County Metal Watch Task Force, said the three laws will be a start.

"This is the first time legislators, the business community, metal recyclers and law enforcement representatives collaborated together to effectively create a workable solution. This is a great example of finding common ground and we thank Representative Tom Forese for his leadership," she said.

The Pima County Metal Watch Task Force, co-chaired by MPA, Building Owners and Managers Association Southern Arizona (BOMA) and Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM) originated last May with the goal of creating a public awareness campaign, passing legislation and supporting law enforcement efforts. The Task Force has over 100 public and private sector members including every Pima County jurisdiction and public safety departments with the common goal of fighting this billion-dollar problem.

Thieves have targeted light pole wiring, plumbing, air conditioning units, manhole covers and metal items from construction yards. While copper is often stolen because of its high market price, other metals are also taken.

"There's no area of society that's not affected by metal theft," Rep. Tom Forese, R-Gilbert, author of House Bill 2262, told the Arizona Capitol Times.

HB 2262 would require all scrap metal dealers to renew a registration with the Department of Public Safety every two years. All registered dealers would have to keep records of every transaction.

The bill also requires all state law enforcement agencies to register on a website that allows them to send descriptions of stolen materials to all recycling centers and other law enforcement with a 100-mile radius of the theft.

For more information: <http://mpaaz.org/advocacy/metal-theft-task-force>

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About MPA: *Metropolitan Pima Alliance is dedicated to advocating responsible development in the Pima County metropolitan area and furthering the interests of the real estate and development industry through education, public policy advocacy and networking. MPA leads the charge in encouraging constructive partnerships between government, community and the real estate industry. Unique to the region, MPA is an alliance of business, government and non-profit organizations. MPA strongly believes in the positive participation and contributions of the private business sector working in collaboration with local jurisdictions.*

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