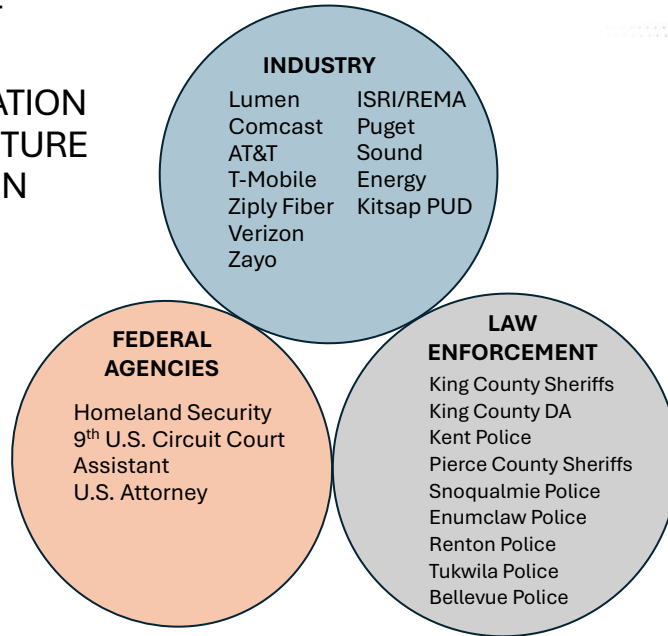


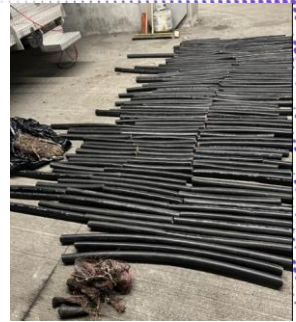
PACIFIC NORTHWEST CRITICAL COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE DESTRUCTION TASK FORCE



DAMAGE EXAMPLES



WIRE TARGETING



NATIONAL TRENDS



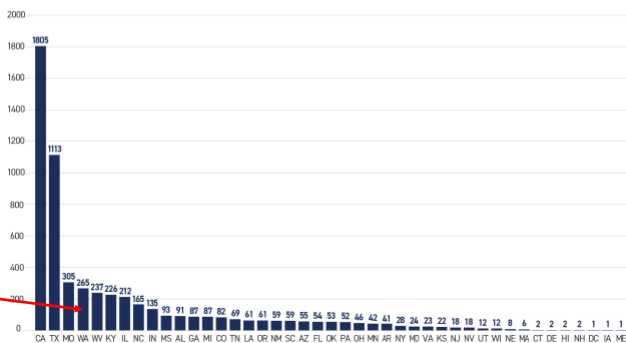
**WA State
#4 for most
incidents by State**

Figure 1. Theft and Vandalism Incidents, June–December 2024



Source: Survey of large and small ISPs across the country reporting incidents.

Figure 2. Incidents by State, June–December 2024



Source: Survey of large and small ISPs across the country reporting incidents.

Protecting Critical Communications Infrastructure



Protecting Washington to the World

- Destruction to critical communications infrastructure has reached a crisis level in WA
- WA leads most states in regulating the recycling industry
- Perpetrators are organized and transport saleable materials out-of-state.
- Combating this crisis is about protecting services to first responders, hospitals, military bases, consumers, etc.
- Since the first of this year, hundreds of thousands of WA customers have lost service due to destruction of communications facilities they rely on in their everyday lives.
- Need more communities to join the coalition to bring the right attention and priority to this crisis to find solutions.

5

City of Tukwila Streets Division

HELP PREVENT WIRE THEFT

From Street Lighting System

The rise in wire thefts has led to long streetlight outages, impacts to public safety, and expensive repairs. **If you see a wire theft happening or notice anything suspicious around City streetlights, call 9-1-1 right away.**

Be alert for suspicious activity – even during the day:

- Thieves might use vans that look official and wear orange construction vests to blend in. Real work-crews use white service vehicles with the Tukwila Seal on the doors, special (XMT) license plates, and flashing lights.
- Thieves may dig around grassy areas near streetlights to find a covered junction box. To cover up their actions, they might drop items like bicycles or cones on top of the box.
- They might also break into the box and cut the wires to create darkness, so they can come back later that night to steal the wires.

After sunset, thieves are likely to return and finish the theft.

- They could pull the wire by hand or attach it to a vehicle or bike for quick removal.
- Often, the stolen wire is stuffed into a backpack.

Scan QR code for more information or visit:
tukwillawa.gov/departments/public-works/wire-theft-awareness-prevention

THANK YOU for your cooperation and patience.

6

Recyclers' Responsibility to Prevent Metal Theft

Association of WA Cities

June 26, 2025



Recycled Materials Association
Sustainable. Resilient. Essential.

recycledmaterials.org

7

Current Purchasing Requirements RCW 19.290

	Scrap Facility
Information on seller	
ID collection of the seller	Copy of ID provided kept on file with record of name/address/telephone number (RCW 19.290.020, RCW 290.030)
Seller signature	Yes (RCW 290.020)
Time, date, location	Yes (RCW 290.020)
Value of the transaction	Yes (RCW 290.020)
Name of employee completing the transaction	Yes (RCW 290.020)
Information on seller's vehicle	Seller's license plate number, state of issue, description of delivery vehicle (RCW 290.020)
Seller's ID information	Driver's license or ID number with copy kept on file (RCW 290.030) Photo ID (HB 1815 – RCW 19.290.030)



Recycled Materials Association

8

8

Current Purchasing Requirements RCW 19.290 cont.

Scrap Facility	
Information on the material being sold	
Description of the material	Weight, quantity, volume – photo or video may additionally be required (see below) (RCW 290.020)
Verification property not stolen	Signed declaration on record by the seller and witnessed and signed by the employee (RCW 290.020)
Limitation of payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yard must video/photo seller's material and take copy of the government ID for the record (RCW 290.030) For yards who do not compile documentation of the sale beyond a copy of photo id and a street address, no cash may be paid and only a check can be sent to the street address after a three day hold. Yards which collect video, photo ID, street address, photo of material may pay up to \$30 cash. The rest may be paid on a stored value card, EFT or check. (RCW 19.290.030) No cash payment for catalytic converters allowed. Payment no earlier than 3 days after receipt of material. Payment must be made by non-transferable check, mailed to street address in transaction record (HB 1815 – RCW 19.290.030)
Length of time to hold record	Five years (RCW 290.020)
Inspection Requirements	Beginning April 1, 2025, annual inspections by WA State Patrol; law enforcement are welcome onsite at any yard at any time, and yards must make records available onsite for inspection ⁹

9

The Role of Yards in Theft Prevention

Recycling yards are expressly prohibited from buying stolen metal under current law, including copper transmission lines. Yards partner with law enforcement and stakeholders to identify thieves

Tools in the Toolbox

- Scrap Theft Alert – sponsored by ReMA national, a free database for anyone to load incidents of metal theft – information dispersed regionally among yards
- Members of regional task forces, police groups, telecom coalitions
- Training employees to identify certain types of materials that may be stolen
- Regular visits with law enforcement, WA State Patrol
- Police reports, alerts shared regularly with yards



10

10

Current laws don't reflect current trends

- ❖ Laws regulate Washington yards, so thieves and rings take material to Oregon or Idaho/Montana
- ❖ Laws are unclear on which agency has the authority to shut down an illegally operating yard
- ❖ Laws continue to regulate the yards but do not criminalize the cutting of critical infrastructure itself – considered a property crime in statutes
- ❖ Laws are focused on metals, when current infrastructure cuts are increasingly fiber lines, which are not recycled.



Recycled Materials
Association

11

How are ReMA members engaged?

- **Supporting law changes to properly regulate the industry**
- **Coordinating with law enforcement, prosecutors**
- **Working with industry on policies around critical infrastructure**



Recycled Materials
Association



12

ReMA Remains Committed

As a 100+ year old industry, metal recyclers are committed to regulations which support the protections of telecommunications, law enforcement, and our communities in which we operate



13

Thank You

Holly Chisa

On behalf of ReMA PNW Chapter

hollychisa@hpcadvocacy.com

(360)791-6647



Recycled Materials
Association

recycledmaterials.org

14