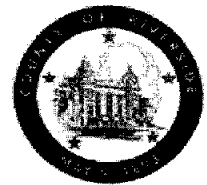


**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

319



FROM: Stanley L. Sniff Jr., Sheriff-Coroner-PA

SUBMITTAL DATE:
02/27/08

SUBJECT: Second Report on the Sheriff's Strategy to Combat Metal Theft

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Maintain its commitment to advocate for and support legislation drafted at the State level to deter metal theft and provide operational guidelines for the scrap industry to discourage processing of stolen property.
2. Resist efforts from the scrap metal industry, and oppose any legislation, that would limit efforts to address metal theft through local ordinance, should appropriate legislation not be enacted at the State level.
3. Accept the attached update concerning metal theft in Riverside County.

BACKGROUND: Recognizing that metal theft continues to be a significant problem throughout the State of California, and Riverside County in particular, the Board of Supervisors directed that the Sheriff's Department provide updates concerning trends, local enforcement strategies, and legislative efforts to address it.

(Continued on Page 2)

BR 08-077

Stanley L. Sniff Jr., Sheriff-Coroner-PA

PETER A. LABAW, ASST. SHERIFF

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	N/A	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	N/A	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	N/A	For Fiscal Year:	FY 2007-08
SOURCE OF FUNDS:				Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 <input type="checkbox"/>
				Requires 4/5 Vote <input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

BY: *Michael R. Shetler*
Michael R. Shetler

County Executive Office Signature

Dep't Recomm.: Consent Policy
Per Exec. Ofc.: Consent Policy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.76 10/2/07, 3.23 12/4/07

District: All

Agenda Number:

3.30

Departmental Concurrence

On December 4, 2007 (3.23), in response to a Board-approved Executive Office recommendation, the Sheriff's Department reported to the Board on its enforcement strategy regarding metal theft in the County. That report highlighted our two person team, based at the Sheriff's Department's Hemet Station in Val Vista, as well as our efforts at communication and enforcement utilizing relationships and investigative cooperation between the Sheriff's Department and other local agencies. Mention was made of our agency's close cooperation with the Riverside County Farm Bureau, building industry trade groups, the Riverside County Code Enforcement and District Attorney's Office in this regard.

Since that report, the Sheriff's Department has continued to participate in interagency investigations and enforcement efforts. Communication with neighboring agencies and local property owners has been emphasized. Property owners have been encouraged to report crimes that have occurred, and to harden potential targets through communication, identification of property through owner-applied numbers, and watchfulness. In addition, in-service education of Sheriff's Department patrol personnel concerning detecting metal theft has continued.

Overall, metal theft in those portions of Riverside County patrolled by the Sheriff's Department increased in 2007. Reported metal theft in the unincorporated areas increased, year to year, by approximately thirty percent. Reported metal theft in the incorporated communities for which the Sheriff's Department provides municipal policing services nearly doubled last year. While absolute numbers are not large, current prices paid for scrap metal, as well as the opportunity for criminals to ply their trade in rural or agricultural areas with relative impunity, create concern.

Current trends suggest that most metal thieves are operating alone or in small groups, and are quickly selling the property they steal, often using the proceeds to purchase narcotics. Sheriff's Department personnel actually conducting investigations into metal theft believe thieves are likely to be dissuaded by one or more of the measures included in proposed legislation.

The Sheriff's Department will continue to provide enhanced training to its patrol personnel using the in-house expertise based at our Hemet Station. We will continue to work with other Riverside County staff to support legislation which we believe would make this crime less attractive.

The Sheriff's Department supports the efforts of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors to convey to State Legislators the importance of passing a law that more adequately addresses the crime of metal theft. The motion by Supervisor Bob Buster which resulted in a Board resolution to write a letter of support for Senator Maldonado's SB 447, and also the direction given the county lobbyist to actively support this same bill, are significant and positive efforts in support of law enforcement and of those businesses and individuals who are victimized by metal theft.

To assist in better tracking the metal theft that does occur in Riverside County, we are developing focused tracking parameters specifically addressing metal theft. As we move through 2008, we expect this enhanced ability to track data and trends to assist in refining our response to this crime.