



March 14, 2019

Senator Wilborn and Members of The Committee,

The noncompliance to report scrap metal sales has caused significant issues for the Wichita Police Department. The Department has noticed an increase in copper theft, auto theft, and items such as catalytic converters cut off of vehicles. This increase in scrap metal thefts has cost over \$600,000.00 in lost property for citizens of Wichita during the last two years. The citizens of Wichita look to the police department for help and sometimes become angry because our hands are tied.


In the past, the Wichita Police Department had a system where scrap metal dealers were required to record what was sold and who was selling the items. They were required to pay with a check and take down information, such as the vehicle tags. During these times, officers were able to review that information after it was placed into a scrap metal database that was maintained by our Pawn Shop Section.

The City's scrap metal ordinances were repealed in July of 2015. At that time, there were approximately 12 scrap metal businesses that were reporting to the Pawn Shop Section. In 2014, there were over 280,000 transactions reported to Wichita Police. Officers could search by name or type of items sold. The Wichita Police Department would do undercover compliance checks; most of the businesses would not take the items. During the undercover checks, some businesses would advise us to take the items to other dealers outside of the City limits. Businesses outside the City limits, did not require the businesses to follow the same rules as inside the City of Wichita.

Many cases were solved by having this data available. Recently, The Wichita Police Department worked a significant number of battery thefts from Cox communications. Due to the lack of a tracking system our investigation was hindered and has taken a substantial amount of time to solve the case.

With our previous system, information would have been readily available for our Detectives on who was scrapping the batteries. There is a desperate need to get a reporting system in place to help regulate the sale of scrap metal. Without this system, we will continue to see the rise in stolen autos, and catalytic converters which are sold as scrap. In 2015, The State of Kansas committed to develop and maintain a database for scrap metal sales. We urge you to complete this legislation so we once again can use this valuable information to solve crimes.

Respectfully,

 #1658
Captain Clay Germany
Property Crimes Bureau

Chief Gordon Ramsay