



Copper Theft Panel Session

EEA H&S Conference 11 August 2026

Discussion Themes

- **Trends & Impacts – why are we concerned about copper theft?**
- **Physical & Technical Defence Strategies – which ones are working... are new issues arising?**
- **Collaboration & Sharing – can we take a stronger stand if we are all working together?**
- **Can we use our EEA / industry strength to influence change?**

Pilot scheme involving police, metal recyclers aims to identify, deter copper thieves | RNZ



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Pilot scheme involving police, metal recyclers aims to identify, deter copper thieves

Bill Hickman
Journalist



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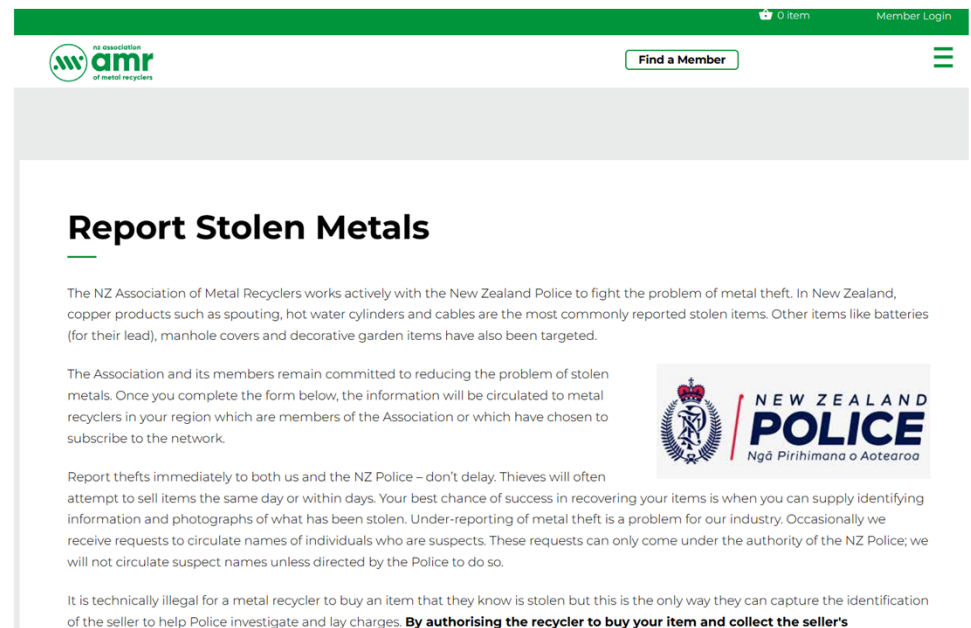
13 March 2024



Please Report Stolen Metals

- [Report Stolen Metals - Metal Recyclers](#)
- <https://nzamr.org.nz/report-stolen-metals>

Association of Metal Recyclers
will immediately alert
all their members
so they can act proactively if
suspect materials are
circulating.



The screenshot shows the website of the NZ Association of Metal Recyclers (AMR). The header is green with the AMR logo on the left, a 'Find a Member' button in the center, and '0 Item' and 'Member Login' on the right. The main content area is white and features the title 'Report Stolen Metals' in bold. Below the title, there is a paragraph explaining that the AMR works with the New Zealand Police to fight metal theft, listing common stolen items like copper products, batteries, manhole covers, and decorative garden items. Another paragraph states the AMR's commitment to reducing metal theft and how they circulate information to members. A third paragraph encourages reporting thefts immediately to both the AMR and the NZ Police, noting that the best chance of recovery is when the report is made quickly. A final paragraph mentions that it is technically illegal for a metal recycler to buy a stolen item but that reporting it is the only way to capture identification for police investigation. The NZ Police logo is displayed on the right side of the page.

Report Stolen Metals

The NZ Association of Metal Recyclers works actively with the New Zealand Police to fight the problem of metal theft. In New Zealand, copper products such as spouting, hot water cylinders and cables are the most commonly reported stolen items. Other items like batteries (for their lead), manhole covers and decorative garden items have also been targeted.

The Association and its members remain committed to reducing the problem of stolen metals. Once you complete the form below, the information will be circulated to metal recyclers in your region which are members of the Association or which have chosen to subscribe to the network.

Report thefts immediately to both us and the NZ Police – don't delay. Thieves will often attempt to sell items the same day or within days. Your best chance of success in recovering your items is when you can supply identifying information and photographs of what has been stolen. Under-reporting of metal theft is a problem for our industry. Occasionally we receive requests to circulate names of individuals who are suspects. These requests can only come under the authority of the NZ Police; we will not circulate suspect names unless directed by the Police to do so.

It is technically illegal for a metal recycler to buy an item that they know is stolen but this is the only way they can capture the identification of the seller to help Police investigate and lay charges. **By authorising the recycler to buy your item and collect the seller's**

Workshop Discussion Poionts:

A number of Critical Risks are present in Copper Theft Events:

Examples/definitions:

Public Safety – Asset Interference/ Theft or Vandalism

Member of the public injured or exposed to potential for injury due to unauthorised access to network sites/assets for the purpose of theft and/or vandalism (i.e. leaving a potential exposure to live electrical sources).

Uncontrolled Release of Energy – Electricity

Employee, contractor or public exposed to an unplanned/uncontrolled release of electrical energy from damaged/unsafe network asset(s).

Work Capacity – Psychosocial Risk – Traumatic event

Employee or contractor injured or exposed to potential workplace factors causing serious mental harm, physical harm or death (including Mental harm such as Post traumatic stress disorders)

Workshop Discussion/Sharing summary:

What Critical Controls can we share across our industry to reduce the risk of fatalities or serious harm/severe illness from Copper Theft Events:

- **Critical Control 1** – Fit for purpose plant and equipment (design, installation and maintenance)
- **Critical Control 2** – Safe operating procedures and practices
- **Critical Control 3** – Safe People engagement, training and competency