

Infrastructure Crime Responders Guidance



Reducing crime through partnership and prevention

The effects of infrastructure crime are wide reaching with impacts felt by industry and local communities.

From transport delays and power cuts, to thefts from community churches and an overall spike on the global metal markets. It is vital therefore that you are aware of the issues and act accordingly.

The content for this guidance has been created in partnership with National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership (NICRP).

What's in this guide

Click on the items in the interactive menu below to jump to that section.

TOP TIPS

- ☑ At the scene of a theft, secure the area and prevent people coming close to the scene, which may contaminate the area.
- ☑ Never touch cut cable, it may still be live and have fingerprints and DNA, which could identify the person responsible.
- ☑ Be aware of strangers loitering at venues where metal or cable is located.
- ☑ Unlocked access gates into a building, construction or storage facility, or work taking place outside normal working hours should be investigated.
- ☑ However insignificant you may feel it is, always report suspicious activity.

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Types of Crimes

Theft of metals such as cable, lead and redundant railway assets costs the economy hundreds of millions. Over recent years, the price of metal has risen considerably, driven by various global economies and increased demand.

The types of crimes involving infrastructure are wide ranging and include:



Copper (electrical uses) theft and damage.



Lead (waterproof flashings on buildings) theft and damage.



Iron and steel (construction industries) theft and damage.



Aluminium (construction, electrical uses) theft and damage.



Battery thefts.



Other valuable metals (used in catalytic converters) theft and damage.



Waste crime / fly tipping.



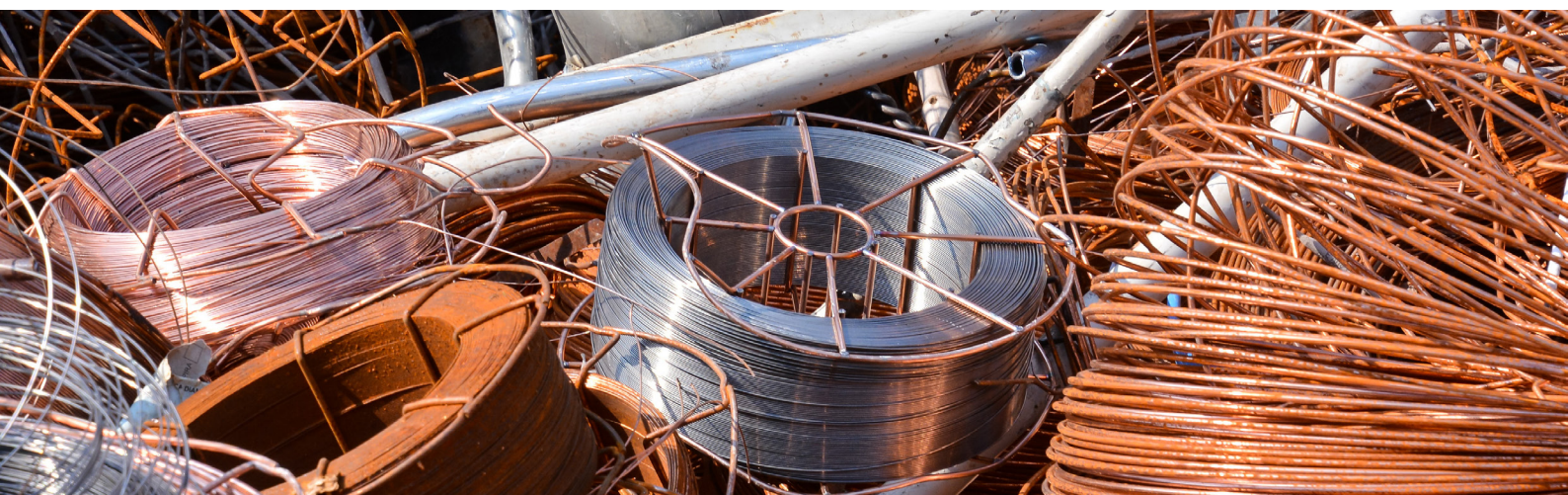
Electricity extraction / cannabis farms.



Illegal encampments and associated clean-up costs.



Threatening behaviour and violence.



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Locations Targeted By Infrastructure Thieves

Cables used for power and communication are a target for thieves. Theft of “live” cable disrupts national infrastructure, costs the UK economy millions and reduces services. If communication cable is stolen there will be a loss of connection, the internet will fail, and services will be disrupted.

Newly laid cable, and cable reels from buildings and yards that are not yet operational are also a target. Whilst stealing un-laid cable has no adverse effects on a network, it will cause problems by delaying the projects vastly adding to the costs.

There is a wide range of locations where infrastructure is stolen including:



Railway lines and infrastructure.



Electricity high voltage sub-stations (400kV-11kV) and electricity pylons.



Telecommunication systems and communication masts.



Water and sewage work.



Hospitals and schools.



Residential properties and building sites.



Scrap yards.



Storage yards, depots, builders' yards, and merchants.



Stately homes and other historical sites.



Cemeteries and war memorials.



Farms.



Churches.



Battery storage (back up batteries).

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Impact of Infrastructure Crime

The impact of infrastructure crimes cannot be overestimated. Trains and other transport can be stopped and delayed, domestic supplies can be cut off and telecommunications, including emergency services can be disrupted.

Industry can be stopped due to loss of electricity, gas or water services. Schools and hospitals can be affected, sporting and music events can be interrupted or cancelled.

Flailing cable or electricity boxes left open are serious risks to the public. Criminals involved in thefts are also at risk of serious injury and even death by cutting electrical cable etc.



What To Look Out For

Unmarked vehicles at or near access points, construction or building sites. Most organisations have marked vehicles with visible company details, although some smaller companies or individual workers may not.

Non-familiar individuals loitering around access points, depot entrances or locations where metal or cable is located.

Work taking place on construction or building sites outside of normal working hours. The local planning authority will know the hours attached to any planning consent within their area, so make an enquiry. Unlocked access gates into a building, construction or storage facility without any clear work taking place, should always be investigated.

Staff working on electrical compounds and other types of infrastructure will probably be doing so at recognised work times with recognised safety equipment. Always engage with workers, they will be more than happy to speak with you.

Many electrical compounds are not routinely staffed; if personnel are seen on site make contact to ascertain their legitimacy for being there.

Non-uniform personnel should always be challenged. Companies require that all workers and contractors are in possession of approved identification and this should be inspected. If you have any suspicions or concerns contact the company, or your line manager.

Thefts can take place anywhere—Openreach suffer with theft at the roadside where thieves remove manhole covers then cut and drag cable away, typically in unmarked vehicles.

Some burglars are known to use graffiti style signs on infrastructure and pathways to indicate where there is cable or metal suitable for stealing.

Thieves mostly target cable during the hours of darkness. Cable sheathing is removed by either stripping or burning it off, and this is often done a short distance from the location of the theft. Once the sheathing is removed, the metal is exposed and becomes unidentifiable. If stopped by police or security it is difficult to prove where it has come from.

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What Can You Do To Help?

Engage with the local community around access, building and construction sites and encourage them to report any suspicious activity.

Check site boundaries to look for gaps, damage, or missing panels, which may be a sign of illegal access to commit theft. Thieves have used markers on fences such as drink cans, old clothes, and lanyards to indicate an area with cable that is vulnerable to theft.

Check site access points to ensure they are secure and report any insecurities or concerns you may have.

Report any activity in or around your place of work, which is outside what you would normally expect to see.

However insignificant you may feel it is, always report suspicious activity.



Action You Should Take at a Crime Scene



Call the police and report the incident.



Stop other people coming close to the crime scene, which may contaminate the area, if possible secure the area.



Never touch the cut ends of a cable, it may still be live and have fingerprints and DNA, which could identify the person responsible.



If the weather is wet, use something dry to cover the exposed ends of the cable.



Look round the area for any unfamiliar items such as tools, drinks containers or cigarette ends, if found try and protect them from inclement weather and inform the police that they do not belong to you.



Identify to police any footprints or vehicle tracks, which do not belong to you or your teams.

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Always Report Crimes to the Police

Always report crime to police. This allows police to capture the data and understand the full scale of the crime, which in turn informs their resources and tactics to tackle it.



When a crime is taking place, dial 999 in an emergency.



You can also report to the Police on 101 or alternatively, you can report online at www.police.uk



Helpful resources

For more information on the work of the National Infrastructure Crime Reduction Partnership visit www.nicrp.org

