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that is morally wrong.*

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

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State Legislature Approves Measures to Fight Copper Theft
Sen. Mayer's Bill Provides Enhanced Recordkeeping & Stronger Penalties

JEFFERSON CITY — The State Legislature gave full passage this week to legislation that provides more protections for farmers, homeowners, businesses, and utilities from the theft of industrial metals. [Senate Bill 1034](#) & [Senate Bill 802](#), sponsored by Sen. Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, and co-sponsored by Sen. Luann Ridgeway, R-Clay Co., requires stronger record-keeping by scrap dealers and increases the penalties for stealing or unlawfully selling copper, brass, bronze or aluminum. Mayer said it addresses the growing theft problem occurring across the state and nation.

"I am very pleased that Missouri is taking the lead in stepping up efforts to combat this growing problem," Mayer said. "These measures will work to put an end to these reckless crimes that are severely disrupting our lives and in many cases putting citizens' safety at risk."

Attracted by high metal prices, thieves are stealing items ranging from catalytic converters, to back-flow valves, to farming equipment, to manhole covers, to electric wiring — leaving damaged property and often creating life-or-death situations in their wake.

Under the new requirements, which will take effect upon the governor's signature, scrap dealers are required to obtain a driver's license and other sales transaction information from customers and to maintain those records for at least two years. Information will be available to law enforcement officers upon request. Scrap dealers who fail to keep accurate records will face a Class A misdemeanor charge.

Ridgeway's provision creates a Class C felony penalty, punishable by 1 to 7 years in prison, for stealing and unlawfully selling utility wire or any utility infrastructure.

"Metal thieves who disrupt electric services will now be punished accordingly," she said.

Scrap metal dealers are banned from purchasing or possessing metal beer kegs for converting to scrap, unless the keg is purchased from a brewer or brewer's sales rep. In addition, scrap yards will be prevented from purchasing metals belonging to cemeteries, political subdivisions, electric cooperatives or any utility except from metal owners or with written permission.

Any payments larger than \$500 will require payment by check or another traceable method, except when the seller has an existing business relationship with the dealer and the seller owns an established business that generates scrap metal.

Senate Leader Mike Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, supported the measure and said the new requirements for scrap dealers and increased penalties for theft will help capture and convict thieves.

"Thieves will no longer to be able to profit from selling stolen scrap metal with no record of who they are and where the metal came from," he said. "Common sense record keeping will give law enforcement the tools they need to track, catch and lock the door on these crooks."

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