



MISSOURI SENATE

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Sen. Mayer's Legislation to Curb Copper Theft Receives Full Senate Approval & Heads to the House

JEFFERSON CITY – The Missouri Senate gave overwhelming approval this week to Sen. Rob Mayer's proposed legislation designed to eliminate a widespread copper theft crisis that is adversely affecting citizens throughout the state.

[Senate Bill 1034](#) will short-circuit the efforts of thieves who steal copper and aluminum metal in Missouri by requiring stronger record-keeping by scrap dealers and by making it a felony to steal or unlawfully sell copper or aluminum. The measure moves to the House for similar consideration, and if approved, goes to the governor's desk for signing into law.

"I'm pleased the Senate recognized the urgent need to address this enormous problem," Sen. Mayer said. "Our intention is to put a stop to these reckless crimes that are severely disrupting our lives and putting our citizens' safety at great risk."

Sen. Mayer's initiative addresses a growing theft problem across the state and nation. Lured by high metal prices and the prospect of fast cash, thieves are targeting consumers, farmers, business owners and utilities and are stealing items ranging from catalytic converters, to back-flow valves, to farming equipment, to manhole covers. In many cases, they create life-or-death situations by leaving property damaged or inoperable.

Under the proposal, scrap dealers would be required to obtain driver's license and vehicle information from the people who sell them copper. Records would include date, time and place of transaction, be kept for two years after the date of purchase, and would be available for inspection by any law enforcement officer.

The act exempts certain scrap metal transactions from record-keeping when the total is less than \$50, or when copper or aluminum is a minor part of the transaction, with exceptions. Payments of more than \$100 would be made only by check or another traceable payment method, except for aluminum beverage can purchases. Other provisions include prohibiting scrap metal dealers from purchasing or possessing metal beer kegs for converting to scrap, unless the keg is purchased from a brewer or brewer's representative. Scrap yards would be prohibited from purchasing cast iron manhole covers without proof of ownership.

Scrap dealers who violate record-keeping requirements would face a class A misdemeanor charge and thieves who steal copper and aluminum scrap metal would be charged with a class D felony.

"By requiring scrap dealers to collect more identifying information from sellers, and by fighting these criminals with stiffer penalties, we will greatly deter their efforts to steal and sell other people's property to make a quick buck," Sen. Mayer said.

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Senator Rob Mayer represents the people of Wayne, Ripley, Butler, Stoddard, New Madrid, Pemiscot and Dunklin counties in the Missouri Senate.