



Metal theft is an increasing problem which has the potential to have a major health and safety impact on the general public. Thieves are putting the lives of both themselves and the public at risk, whilst causing extensive damage and disruption to services. The environmental contamination impact costs can also be high.

There have already been fatalities in both the ROI and UK with some press articles stating an average of two deaths per month. It is only a matter of time before someone is fatally injured due to metal theft in Northern Ireland.

Along with the more obvious health and safety risks, NIW is also concerned that such crimes have the potential to interfere with its ability to provide quality drinking water to its customers and to increase the risk of a pollution incident beyond the Company's control.

On 1 September 2012 the PSNI launched a new Metal Theft Initiative in partnership with the NI Environment Agency and the Department of Justice. The initiative includes a Code of Conduct which participating Scrap Metal Dealers in NI will adhere to and which is hoped will help to deter metal theft. There is also an on-going media campaign to raise awareness of the risks to the general public arising from metal theft. This initiative builds on the Crimestoppers campaign "Crush Metal Theft" launched on 27 March 2012 in conjunction with the Justice Minister and many of NI's utility organisations.

All of NIW's scrap metal is disposed of through controlled procedures using a tendered contractor, and we do not sell scrap metal through any other channels. We would ask that if scrap dealers are approached by persons purporting to be from NIW that they pass details to both NIW and the PSNI.

What we are doing to prevent Metal Theft

NIW is a member of the NI Utilities Group on Metal Theft which is currently lobbying the NI Assembly to enact Metal Theft legislation for Northern Ireland.

We have on-going projects to protect our assets from being stolen including the use of CCTV cameras, forensic marking, etc.

All incidents of metal theft relating to NI Water are reported to the PSNI and we assist the PSNI in any prosecutions resulting from this.

What you can do

If you are aware of or see metal theft in your local area please contact us on 08457 440088 or:



Call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or the PSNI on 0845 600 8000

If possible passing on details what was stolen and from where, the time and date of the theft, descriptions of the perpetrators and vehicle make, colour and registration details.

The Risks

Uncovered manholes present a serious risk of injury to cyclists, motorists and pedestrians.

The theft of water tanks from empty premises can result in flooding and be to the public.

Cutting fences and gates to gain illegal access to NIW sites leaves dangerous sites open and a risk to children.