



MORRIS TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

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John McGuinness
Chief of Police

Theft of Copper Pipe

-- *UPDATE* --

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The Morris Township Police Dept. continues to investigate residential burglaries where the main target appears to be the copper plumbing inside. Since July 18th officers have investigated ten (10) reported thefts. It is believed that the suspect(s) are specifically targeting homes which appear to be vacant, as most have had for sale signs on the lawn. Some have been vacant overnight, others weeks. It is also believed that the burglaries happen in the pre-dawn hours where forced entry into the residence can be covered up by darkness and the sound of air conditioners running. Once inside, work to remove the pipe quickly focuses to the lower floors.

Theft of copper pipes, tubing, and wiring has been on the rise in recent years due to the increased value for scrap copper. The US Department of Energy estimates that this once minor problem has exploded into \$1 billion a year nightmare. Construction sites, abandoned buildings, and commercial heating and air conditioning units have been the biggest targets for these thieves. More often than not the damage caused obtaining the copper vastly exceeds the value of the copper, but this does not deter the thieves.

As these incidents focus on residential neighborhoods we are asking residents to stay vigilant to what is going on around them. As the weather cools and windows stay open at night it is hoped that a resident will hear or see something when the crime is being committed. If there is a vacant home near them or if they are aware of a neighbor who is away, residents should make note of any suspicious activity day or night and call the police immediately. Anyone with information on these incidents or who may have seen anything suspicious in the area is asked to contact the Morris Township Detective Bureau at 973-326-7480.

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