

Q-Star Technology **NEWS**

News and Information about how customers are using FlashCAM systems

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Rise in Copper Theft Could Bring Shocking Penalties

The news reports a rash of theft of copper and other valuable metals. It seems that no one is immune from this type of theft: municipalities, businesses, homes. Electric utility substations are a favorite target for thieves, sometimes with tragic consequences. A retrospective study of individuals examined by the Coroner's Office in one county found that 8 individuals died while trying to steal from a power utility. All decedents were men; average age of 33 years. Seven decedents were attempting to steal copper. All bodies had either alcohol or drugs in their system. These 8 decedents attempted their theft during daylight hours.

Construction sites are another favorite target with thieves cutting copper pipes right out of the buildings, or stealing untended rolls of copper wire or tubing. Telephone companies are also a target. Cities are victims of this wave of thefts as well. Officials in one midwestern city estimate that in the past year more than \$7.5 million in damage has been done to city facilities by scrap scavengers.

What are the underlying factors in this dramatic rise in copper and aluminum theft?

- Economic growth; as we become more dependent on electronic communications and computers, there's even more demand for copper wiring.
- Scrap copper sells for upwards of \$3.50 per pound.
- Some drug addicts are willing to risk their lives to steal copper to re-sell to feed their "habit."
- Salvage recycling centers that "don't ask, don't tell." They don't ask for identification and don't tell local law enforcement about suspicious transactions.



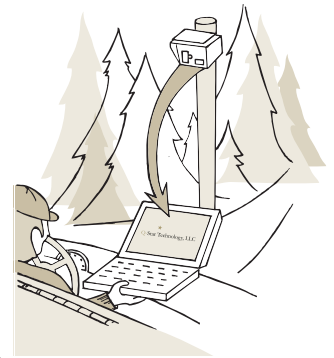
Copper Thief

What actions are cities and companies taking to fend off this assault?

- Make copper wiring & tubing as inaccessible as possible.
- Take precautions in the form of locks, specially designed bolts and warning signs to deter thefts and break-ins at transformers, substations and other locations where large amounts of copper is used or stored.
- Install digital FlashCAM systems, set to function 24/7 to deter thefts and/or identify suspects.

NEW FlashCAM-880 Features Wireless Download

Shipments of the new FlashCAM-880 model have already begun. Many customers are upgrading older FlashCAM models to take advantage of the wireless download feature before cold weather sets in. As a customer in the Midwest said with a grin, "It will be so comfortable this winter to sit in my heated truck and download the picture files onto my laptop computer."



The FlashCAM-880 also features a 6 megapixel digital camera and reports from the field indicate the picture quality, even night time pictures, are excellent.

To get all the details contact Q-Star customer service toll-free at (866) 201-4197 or your local sales rep. to set an appointment for a FlashCAM-880 demo. ▲

FlashCAM-880 Ease-of-Use Appeals to Buyers

Fresno, CA Code Enforcement was quick to upgrade to the FlashCAM-880 Wireless. One of their trouble spots involved a difficult-to-get-to FlashCAM installation, high atop a pitched roof. The wireless download makes retrieval of picture files easy.

Desert Water Agency, Palm Springs, CA uses a FlashCAM-880 to protect infrastructure and water sites.

The Phoenix, AZ Anti-Graffiti Program is one of the best in the country. This program, and its use of FlashCAM systems, is award-winning. The latest addition in their arsenal is a FlashCAM-880 Wireless.

Mecklenburg County, NC uses the FlashCAM-880 in their parks system to deter graffiti and vandalism.

The City of San Juan, TX uses the FlashCAM-880 to deter graffiti, trash dumping and other anti-social behavior.

The City of Baltimore, MD is using a combination of FlashCAM-770's and FC-880's to deter illegal trash dumping.

Stopping Theft at Storage Yard

Construction Market

John Merlo, at Symons Corp. (City of Industry, CA) is using a FlashCAM-770 to stop thefts at their storage yard. Symons supplies specialized material for concrete and masonry construction. They stock large quantities of steel and aluminum beams used in construction of multi-story buildings.

According to John the FlashCAM-770 has stopped the theft problem. He said the chain link fence around the yard is checkered with plywood patches from past break-ins, but none have been added since they installed the FlashCAM system. The first incident in a long time occurred the day before we interviewed John. Someone had cut the lock off the gate, but nothing was stolen. ▲

Pro-Active Program Nets Arrests of Graffiti Vandals

The city of Chino, CA has put strong emphasis on reducing graffiti--and it's working. According to Kurt Powell, Public Works Services Manager, in July the city responded to 1,879 instances of graffiti compared to 3,085 a year earlier. For the past several years each graffiti event has been recorded, along with a photograph that typically shows the vandal's moniker. In addition the city uses FlashCAM systems which are deployed in each of six parks. The police department has also increased their efforts at arresting graffiti vandals. The result—over 65 arrests of taggers in the past few weeks. The large database of monikers helped them build some cases that resulted in collecting restitution.



Meanwhile the digital FlashCAM systems have deterred graffiti completely at the park locations where they are installed. What Chino is doing is typical of towns that have mounted a successful anti graffiti program. A good program is generally a combination of community emphasis on the problem, a good historical database, quick removal of graffiti and, in Chino's case, stopping new graffiti with the FlashCAM systems. ▲

Lakeland, FL Parks & Recreation

Bob Donahay, Director of Parks & Rec. is having great success with FlashCAM-770's at reducing vandalism in their parks. He reports a "noticeable reduction of vandalism" in every park where the units have been installed. They use the "Take Delay" mode to reduce the number of photos taken in heavy vehicle traffic areas. ▲

Salvation Army Stops Vandalism at Drop-Off Locations



One way the Salvation Army funds its many programs is through donation of clothing and household items which are then sold at their stores. They have over 1,500 stores in the U.S. alone. One of the problems they encounter is when goods are dumped outside of the stores after hours it is subjected to looting, mostly by drug addicts, but also by garage sale entrepreneurs who are gathering things to sell. The result of this after-hours dumping is a scattered mess, while most items of value that might end up on store shelves are pilfered away.

Q-Star to the rescue. California Salvation Army stores in Lancaster, Porterville and Bakersfield now have FlashCAM systems watching their "drop-off" areas. According to Captain Mark Nelson, stationed at the Bakersfield distribution center, there is still some "good guy" dumping, but the looting has stopped at these three locations. ▲

Miami Gardens, FL

Many Keep America Beautiful affiliates use FlashCAMs to deter illegal trash dumping. Tsahai Codner, Executive Director of Keep Miami Gardens Beautiful is the first KAB affiliate in Florida to jump on the FlashCAM bandwagon with support from City Manager Dr. Danny O. Crew and Mayor Shirley Gibson.

The problem in Miami Gardens was consistent trash dumping in a neighborhood with lots of kids. Household items such as couches, tires, paint cans (hazardous waste) were routinely dumped at a cul du sac location. Kids in the neighborhood played in this area. The solution: install a FlashCAM-770 to watch over the site. Tsahai reports the dumping has stopped and the kids have a clean place to play. ▲



Des Moines, IA Police Department

Des Moines was again (4th time) named an All-American City by the National Municipal League. Residents appreciate the small-town atmosphere with big-city amenities. Along with growth comes big city problems including graffiti and illegal trash dumping.

Detective Jeff Cronin, Des Moines PD says "Our FlashCAM system is working great." It has stopped graffiti dead in its tracks at every location he has installed it. Installation sites have been in parks, alley ways and in one case on private property. Jeff also got excellent pictures of vehicle license numbers when he installed it in a dumping area. They plan to upgrade the FC-770 to a FC-880 and buy additional systems. ▲