

## **Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)**

**INFOGRAM 28-08**

**July 24, 2008**

***NOTE:** This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at [emr-isac@dhs.gov](mailto:emr-isac@dhs.gov).*

### **New Metal Theft Threatens ESS**

There is no humor in the pun that the latest twist in metal thefts plaguing Emergency Services Sector (ESS) departments and agencies across the nation is the removal of brass hydrant nuts. According to news accounts reviewed by the Emergency Management and Response— Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC), jurisdictions report dozens of hydrants being rendered inoperable, sometimes including all hydrants in proximity to working fires. Hence, the epidemic of metal thefts continues to degrade critical infrastructure resources.

The brass hydrant nuts are the latest addition to a growing list of equipment stolen by metal thieves that includes hydrants, hose connections, backflow-prevention devices, valves, and water meters. Fire departments need the equipment not only to maintain continuity of operations and response-ability, but to ensure that personnel are not endangered at locations where water is unavailable or must be shut off until repairs are made.

The 15 May 2008 EMR-ISAC CIP INFOGRAM article on metal thefts included a list of mitigation practices in use by ESS departments across the United States. In order to position fire departments to mount an immediate proactive response to the current theft of brass hydrant nuts, the EMR-ISAC encourages the following measures:

- Visit scrapyards within the jurisdiction as soon as possible to leave copies of equipment descriptions and pictures of the brass nuts, and ask proprietors to report individuals who attempt to sell them.
- Alert law enforcement agencies so that their personnel who visit recycling sites and scrapyards looking for stolen material will be aware of the newest threat.
- Carry spare parts on all apparatus to access hydrants that have been maliciously altered.
- Solicit the help of local media outlets in requesting that community members call 9-1-1 if they observe suspicious activity in the vicinity of hydrants.
- Contact the Theft Alert system operated by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI), which, in turn, will notify scrap facilities about the thefts of brass hydrant nuts. To access the alert system and view or download metal theft resource materials, visit [http://www.isri.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Materials\\_Theft#alerts](http://www.isri.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Materials_Theft#alerts).

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