

DEFINITION: Metal theft refers to the illegal removal of items for their constituent metals. It can take numerous forms, from the theft of copper railway cabling to the theft of lead from church roofs. Unlike other items targeted in thefts, stolen metals have little inherent value to the metal thief; profit is only generated upon sale. For this reason, it is assumed that many items are stolen with the intention of being sold to scrap metal merchants.

Research on metal theft is limited, particularly reliable evaluations of efforts to reduce metal theft (or specific types of metal theft). This absence is partly explained by the difficulty in accessing metal theft data from pol