



## OCEANSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT Backflow Theft Prevention

Commercial irrigation and domestic water backflow preventers are being stolen for their brass and copper fittings throughout San Diego County.

The following can be done to prevent these thefts:

- Paint the device. Paint is a deterrent because painted metal is a little less valuable. If copper is painted black it can look like worthless plastic tubing.
- Camouflage the device. Fake rocks work well. Just make sure there is a one-foot clearance around the device.
- Hide the device. Paint it green and place it in a bush or hedge. This is a low-cost measure.
- Use a device with plastic parts. They won't be stolen because they are worthless.
- Enclose the device in a protective cage. Secure the cage to its base with a padlock that is hard to cut or else the thieves will steal the cage too.
- Install a locking-cable system with shielded-shackle locks and a concrete foundation.
- Secure the water supply to the device with a lock when possible.

Painting informs the scrap dealer to question the seller for proof of ownership and it can be used to identify the owner.

Etch or paint some identifying words or numbers on pieces of metal that might be stolen. Or use metal products with serial numbers and other identifying symbols etched on them. Make sure to record the serial numbers and have them available to provide to law enforcement if the device is stolen. This will also enable you to identify your metal if it is recovered.

If you see anyone in the area that appears to be working on the devices at your business, take the time to check whether or not there is a work order or if they have authorization.

For emergencies or to report crimes in progress please call **9-1-1**.

For non-emergency calls or to report suspicious activity please call **(760)435-4911**.



### OCEANSIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Crime Prevention Unit  
3855 Mission Ave.  
Oceanside, CA 92058  
(760)435-4543