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Georgia Strengthens the Fight Against Copper Theft

By Riley Blount, AT&T Georgia President

Copper theft is on the rise in Georgia, prompting AT&T to take additional measures to combat the issue.

AT&T is offering a reward of up to \$10,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of copper theft suspects in Georgia. This reward sends a clear message: Copper theft is a serious crime, and stopping it requires continued coordination across communities, law enforcement, public officials, recyclers and communications providers.

Georgia currently ranks among the top 5 states in the country for copper wire theft impacting AT&T's network. To date this year, AT&T has recorded 444 incidents in Georgia. Incidents have risen 29% in recent weeks and 76% over the last month in comparison to previous months, pointing to a broader upward trend, not just a short-term spike.

The effects are being felt most in the Atlanta area, where AT&T teams continue to encounter stolen and damaged cables several times a week. And every damaged or missing cable has a real-world implication for our network and our customers.

In one recent incident, thieves cut a section from a large cable serving the Lithonia-Panola area. The damage affected several local businesses and a nursing home care facility. Restoring that cable became an urgent health and safety priority.

A separate incident in the same area disrupted service for residential customers across parts of three neighborhoods.

In another incident, thieves posing as construction workers stole nearly 4,000 feet of copper wiring – the equivalent of 13 football fields, leaving an entire neighborhood without internet service for 24 hours.

In some instances, thieves targeting copper cut newer fiber lines after mistaking them for copper cable. Fiber contains no copper and has no value to copper thieves, but cutting it interrupts service for customers who rely on AT&T's modern fiber network.

Damage to communications infrastructure can also create dangerous conditions for technicians, first responders and the public. Cut or abandoned cables may result in hazardous work sites, and subsequent outages can affect services residents, businesses and public safety depend on every day.

We appreciate the continued efforts of Georgia law enforcement and local partners working to address these crimes. Strong coordination helps investigators identify stolen materials, disrupt theft, hold offenders accountable and protect essential communications infrastructure.

The importance of community collaboration is evident in the Metro Atlanta area, where targeted efforts to combat copper theft are producing tangible results.

We are closely collaborating with law enforcement, local officials, recyclers and other communications providers on copper theft prevention efforts. Since establishing this coordinated community response, we have seen an increase in copper theft related arrests in Georgia.

Additionally, community awareness is critical. Residents and business owners can help by staying alert and reporting suspicious activity around utility lines, network equipment, manholes, poles and other communications facilities. Owners and operators of recycling businesses should be on the lookout for potentially stolen materials. Quick reporting helps law enforcement respond before additional damage occurs and broader service disruptions result.

We are also working to modernize our network and upgrade our customers where possible from copper to newer, more reliable technologies like advanced fiber and 5G wireless.

At AT&T, we remain committed to protecting our network and the Georgians who rely on it. By working together, we can help deter copper theft, safeguard critical infrastructure and keep Georgians connected.

Anyone with information about copper theft should contact local law enforcement and AT&T Global Security at **1-800-807-4205**. Information that leads to the arrest and conviction of copper theft suspects in Georgia may be eligible for a reward of up to \$10,000.

For more updates and stories, read additional information [here](#).