

Loss Prevention News

Provided by the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool

Heavy Construction Equipment and Theft

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While a wide range of equipment is stolen every year (ranked by frequency of theft), the following categories prove to be the most popular with thieves:

23%	Backhoe, Track, Skip, Wheel Loaders	17%	Skid Steer	4%	Other
22%	Light Utility, Work Truck, Trailers	6%	Lifts	3%	Light Tower
20%	Air Compressor, Generator, Welder	4%	Mini Excavator	2%	Dump Truck

There are a few causes for the rise in theft:

- Titling and registration of equipment is not mandated.
- Equipment is identified by Product Identification Numbers (PINs), not the standard 17 digit Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) used for cars and trucks.
- There is a high demand for construction equipment.
- There is often poor security – remote, poorly secured work sites on private land, “open” cab machines, and universal keys that work on a number of pieces of equipment.
- It has become harder to detect theft.



Keep your equipment safe from thieves:

- Paint or label all equipment with a clearly visible product identification number (PIN).
- Document the manufacturer, model number, PIN, and date of purchase for each piece of equipment and keep this information on file and secure.
- Fence in all your equipment when feasible.
- Park equipment close together if safe and feasible, with smaller pieces in the center; chain small equipment to larger equipment.
- Ask police for more frequent patrols of the jobsite.
- Install on-site security, especially after hours; light the jobsite through the night.
- Use immobilizers like wheel locks, fuel shut offs or ignition locks.
- Install a recovery system, such as GPS tracking system, which helps law enforcement track down equipment.



In the event that all precautions fail and your equipment is stolen, notify your local law enforcement immediately. Make it easier for them to investigate the theft by providing information such as equipment identification numbers and where on the equipment to find the information. Organizations are available that allow equipment owners to register (for a fee) their fleet on an ownership database accessible to law enforcement agencies nationwide. If the equipment listed on this database is reported as stolen and then located, officers that find the suspicious equipment can check the database to verify its ownership. For more information, contact your Loss Prevention Representative.

The TMLIRP Media Library includes #126 - *Headaches for Vandals: Jobsite Vandalism and Tool Theft Prevention* and #131 - *Stealing From Thieves - Equipment Theft Prevention*. Refer to www.tmlirp.org or call 800-537-6655 and ask for the Loss Prevention Department.