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Dufferin OPP responds to two seperate copper theft incidents on same street in Melancthon

Written By Sam Odrowski

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Copper theft continues to be an issue in the region, particularly impacting communities in northern Dufferin, as the price of copper hit a new all-time high earlier this month.

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are now investigating two separate incidents of copper theft, both occurring along River Road in Melancthon between Jan. 14 and 15. Both incidents are suspected to have taken place during early morning hours.

?These thefts commonly involve telephone lines, utility wiring, and cable infrastructure and are often reported in rural, poorly lit, or isolated areas,? reads a press release from Dufferin OPP. ?These thefts typically occur during the early morning hours but may happen at any time. In many cases, wires are cut from utility poles, dragged to nearby roadways, and collected later to avoid detection.?

Perpetrators of copper wire theft have, in the past, used reflective clothing or safety gear to appear as legitimate utility or road workers when committing theft to reduce suspicion among passing motorists and nearby residents.

?Copper theft is not only a criminal offence but also presents a serious public safety concern. Damage to critical infrastructure can result in service disruptions, including impacts to telephone and internet services and, in some cases, emergency services such as 9-1-1. These disruptions can delay emergency response and place the public at risk,? reads Dufferin OPP's press release.

?These thefts can also affect residents in other ways. Repairing damaged infrastructure can take time and resources, which may influence service availability or cause temporary interruptions in affected areas.?

Dufferin OPP is requesting the public's help in reporting suspicious activity to apprehend individuals who commit copper theft.

?Residents are encouraged to remain vigilant and report individuals cutting or handling utility lines, tampering with infrastructure, or vehicles parked on road shoulders without an apparent purpose. If you observe suspicious activity in progress, contact police immediately by calling 9-1-1,? reads Dufferin OPP's press release.