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Sarasota County cracking down on copper thefts at county buildings

Sarasota County Utility officials are stepping up their efforts to deter copper thefts at county facilities by installing additional security cameras and asking law enforcement to step up patrols around lift stations and other county-owned buildings.

One person was arrested over the recent holiday weekend after video cameras captured a theft in progress.

"It's not just the cost of replacing the copper, but all the damage they do to get to it as well," said Verne Hall, Sarasota County Utilities manager.

In addition to the cost of repairing the vandalism, thieves create a public safety hazard by making lift stations more prone to malfunctioning, causing a sewage spill and leaving live electrical circuits exposed.

"Every time we have to repair damage to a facility caused by vandals or thieves, it costs the ratepayers a lot more money than just replacing the copper," Hall said.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000.

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