

## **Hoquiam Copper Theft Will Cost Taxpayers**

### **Local News**

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Posted on : July 4, 2012 at 2:38 pm

HOQUIAM, Wash. - Four Hoquiam residents were arrested as a result of the theft of approximately 15 feet of copper refrigerant piping from the Hoquiam Department of Licensing building on June 20th, 2012. Officers were dispatched to the location after employees of the Department of Licensing noticed the air conditioning was not functioning. Employees subsequently found all of the copper plumbing leading from the building to the commercial AC units had been cut and stolen. On June 21st, employees of Butcher's Scrap Metal called police after receiving metal matching the description. This led to the arrest of two females, 41 and 50 years old. Further investigation led officers to a residence in the 2800 block of Simpson Avenue, the residence of a 38 year old woman, where a search warrant was served, recovering additional scrap metal and evidence of narcotics trafficking. Two additional residences were also searched by police in connection with the investigation. Following an interview of the 38 year old suspect, Officers arrested the 4th subject, a 54 year old male, as he was implicated by the others of selling the stolen metal for narcotics. Two of the four subjects were booked into the Grays Harbor County Jail for Trafficking in Stolen Property. The other two have been submitted to the Grays Harbor County Prosecutor's Office and the Hoquiam City Attorney's Office for various drug related and stolen property charges. The stolen copper pipe was sold for \$72.00. Damage to the City of Hoquiam owned property is estimated in excess of \$2500.00. "The increased theft of metal has become epidemic in the Grays Harbor community. This case clearly demonstrates that it not only reaches our private citizens, but the tax payers within the City of Hoquiam now must accept the burden of costly repairs."