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10 charged with stealing 50 vehicles in St. Paul for scrap

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The Ramsey County attorney's office is charging 10 individuals in connection with stealing 50 vehicles and selling them for scrap metal.

The charges stem from a three-month investigation by St. Paul police.

"The message I want to be heard loud and clear is that auto theft is a high priority of our office, and that car thieves will be held accountable in Ramsey County," said Ramsey County Attorney John Choi.

The thefts occurred between January and June throughout St. Paul, said Officer John Keating, a St. Paul police spokesman.

The thefts involved three different criminal schemes, the county attorney's office said.

The scrap netted an average \$300-350 per car, Keating said. Weight and daily price of metal are factors.

Choi has proposed legislators take action to improve regulation of the scrap metal industry to make it harder for this type of theft.

Specifically, he recommended the state require title or proof of ownership before cars can be sold for scrap. He also recommended a 30-day waiting period before cars can be salvaged.

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