



The food and beverage industry consistently experience significant financial losses due to the theft of returnable plastic containers. These thefts can be at the hands of illegal recyclers who will steal trays and crates for regrinding and sale of the plastic pellets. Alternatively, some thieves are actually other businesses looking to avoid the costs of buying their own trays. In any case, many companies are forced to spend in excess of \$10 million annually in replacement costs. As these thefts continue to rise, so do the prices of everyday consumer products.

Preventative Measures

The best methods for preventing these losses start in the warehouse. By following the steps below, you can help your company and the entire food industry save money spent on tray replacement that might be better used on higher wages, more jobs, and better equipment.

For Drivers

1. Let your supervisor know as soon as you suspect theft/unauthorized use of your company's trays with details of why you believe the use is unauthorized.
2. If possible **and safe to do so**, photograph incidents of suspected thefts. Do not enter any facilities or areas you are not already permitted to be.
3. If possible **and safe to do so**, try to estimate the number of trays being stolen.
4. For your safety, **do not** attempt to intervene in a theft or recover stolen trays on your own.
5. Unless someone's personal safety is at risk during a theft, allow your supervisor to handle contacting police/law enforcement.

For Supervisors

When notified of a potential theft, please gather as much of the following information in order to submit a police report. **It is important that you report thefts to law enforcement. If they do not know about the issue, they cannot respond to the issue.**

1. Date, time, and location of suspected theft
2. Name of employee who noticed violation
3. Any photos of suspected theft
4. Any license plates or identifying information about truck used in theft
5. An estimation of how many trays/crates were stolen
6. An assurance that the suspected thief has no legitimate connection to your company

Once a report has been filed:

1. Report the above information and police department/report number to your company's legal department
2. Visit www.rpc-theft.org and submit details under the "Report a Theft" tab.