

# Is it a crime to damage photovoltaic panels

Are criminals looking at solar panels?

And alongside machinery, recent figures from the UK police suggest criminals have set their sights on another lucrative opportunity - solar panels. Solar is currently only a small part of the UK's energy mix, but its share is growing, with estimates from Solar Energy UK suggesting the total solar capacity stands at 15 GW.

Is solar project theft a crime?

Indeed, he confirms that most solar project theft is committed by organised crime groups, notably in the UK and the Netherlands where DeterTech has experience working with clients.

Does the UK have a solar crime rate?

And the UK experience is far from unique. German solar security business Viamon tells pv magazine that more than 5,000 "major" solar thefts annually occur in Europe, with more than 400 in Germany alone. In southern Italy, says Viamon Managing Director Oliver Strecke, the solar crime rate is 10 times higher than the European average.

Are solar panels stolen?

By way of example, in August, solar panels worth approximately £10 500 were stolen from an energy farm in Northamptonshire. Solar panel theft is not limited to large scale and commercial solar farms either - homes in remote areas are also vulnerable, with thieves reportedly swiping panels from people's roofs. Why?

"Solar crime is on the increase," says Rachael Oakley, director of crime intelligence at Telford-based DeterTech, formally known as SmartWater Group thanks to its product-marking ...

Beyond the financial toll, solar panel theft and vandalism can have detrimental effects on the environment. The disruption in renewable energy production can undermine efforts to reduce ...

Alongside many, similarly ambitious targets in the rest of the world, the sheer number of solar crimes is likely to rise with more panels on the ground.

Unfortunately, what should be a virtuous initiative is giving rise to a new crime wave, with police data showing a staggering 48% rise in solar panel and cabling theft from 2021 to 2022.

Solar power equipment theft refers to the unlawful removal of solar panels, inverters, batteries, and other associated components from residential or commercial properties. This crime ...

"Small, low-level criminal damage needs to be reported," said Taylor. "We know 61% of victims of solar energy [crime] are then repeat victims, either themselves or there's a site within five ...

While once a rather niche concern, solar crime is increasingly making headlines, particularly at commercial-scale installations. According to Spotter Global, theft from solar farms was ...



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Invest in insurance for your solar panels to protect against theft and vandalism. Ensure professional installation and regular cleaning to deter potential thieves and vandals. Implement security measures ...

Report all solar thefts to the police and to DeterTech Crime Intelligence. It allows for the improved tracking and conviction of organised criminal gangs. Install monitored CCTV and alarm ...

Malicious acts could lead to criminal charges and 2. civil liabilities for individuals causing damage. Such legal repercussions are essential to deter vandalism and safeguard community ...

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