

Scrapping in Saint Paul

What is "scrapping"?

Scrapping is the practice of making a living by collecting and disassembling old or inoperable items and selling it as scrap metal to be re-processed/recycled.

Is it legal?

Collecting and reprocessing metal for profit is considered a Recycling Business under the law. A Recycling Business requires a license according to [Chapter 357](#) of the St. Paul Administrative Code. If conducted without a license, scrapping is most likely illegal. Furthermore, hauling solid waste as part of a business requires a Commercial Vehicle License, also detailed in [Chapter 357](#). In addition, Recycling Collection and Processing Centers are allowed only in areas zoned for industrial uses within the City of St. Paul under [Chapter 408](#) of the Code.

Scrapping can have a negative impact on the neighboring community, which is why licensed Recycling Businesses are required to follow the regulations outlined in Chapter 357 and 408. Scrapping is often related to additional City Code violations such as noise, dumping, exterior maintenance (such as scrap/trash in the yard), parking, zoning, etc. Scrapping may also be related to criminal activity such as theft.

To view requirements and apply for a Recycling Processing Center or Recycling Collection Center license, visit www.stpaul.gov/dsi and look-up business licenses or call the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) at 651-266-8989.

If you suspect illegal scrapping

Please report issues related to scrapping to the Department of Safety and Inspections at (DSI) 651-266-8989 or fill out an online complaint at www.stpaul.gov (select 'I want to' and 'Ask a question or make a complaint'). If there is an urgent concern outside of business hours (such as noise), call the St. Paul Police non-emergency line at 651-291-1111. As always, if there is an emergency, dial 911.

What happens when I make a complaint?

Because each instance of illegal scrapping is unique and a variety of violations may be determined, different enforcement tools are used depending on the situation. A DSI Code Enforcement Inspector will visit the site and determine if they are in violation of Chapter 45 and issue a summary abatement if appropriate. They will be looking at any stored items, garbage, metal, junk and debris. They will also order commercial vehicle to be removed from residential property. The property owner is required to remove these violations and given a specific time period to accomplish this, if they fail to do this the city will remove these items and charge all cost back to the owner.

The DSI will follow up with their supervisor and determine if the case needs on going monitoring. DSI will then maintain a file and do regular inspections of the property if needed.

If DSI Inspectors suspect criminal behavior, the Police will be notified and a criminal tag may be given. If the City (DSI or Police) is forced to return to the property multiple times, the property owner may be issued an excessive consumption of city services fee.

If illegal and nuisance behavior persists, you may work with the St. Paul Police FORCE Unit to address the on-going nuisance in the neighborhood. Police leadership contact information, including FORCE Unit Commanders, can be found for each Patrol District (West, Central and East) [here](#).

You can also contact the Mayor or City Council offices. Contacts for specific elected officials can be found at www.stpaul.gov under 'Government', or call 651-266-8989 and ask to be connected.