

Copper thieving duo get the shaft

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
Friday, 01 April 2022 04:50



Two men led police on a chase through Gallup after absconding with some copper wire from Gallup's streets department headquarters.

Andrew Howe, 31, of Gallup, and Shawn Denney, 44, from Gamerco, face larceny charges for allegedly going after a spool of precious metal paid for with taxpayer dollars.

It all started on March 11, around 5:03 am, when Metro Dispatch received a call from a city employee regarding two men loading up some copper wire from the streets department, 840 Warehouse Ln.

When Gallup Police Officer Philamina Chischilly arrived at the scene, a city employee explained that a small black SUV was seen near the electrical storage yard. The employee said he saw the two men take the wire off the spool and load it into their vehicle before leaving the area.

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As Chischilly began to ask the employee for more detail about the black SUV, the employee pointed to a black SUV heading west near the railroad tracks. According to the report, Chischilly watched the SUV get onto Allison Road.

Officer Iris Pinero told Chischilly that she was in the area and available to help. The vehicle was stopped south of the intersection of U.S. Highway 491 and Chino Loop.

Chischilly asked the driver, Howe, where they were coming from, and he told her they were coming from the west side of Gallup. The passenger, Denney, said they were heading home.

The report states that Chischilly noticed there was a thick wire rolled up in the back of the SUV. She estimated that it was 25-30 feet long and about an inch and a half thick.

The officers detained the two men and placed them in the back of their patrol vehicles.

Meanwhile, Metro Dispatch told Chischilly that Denney had a warrant for his arrest.

While Chischilly was briefing Sgt. Terrance Pekeytewa on the incident, Howe admitted to her that he had taken the wire off the spool outside of the gate of the streets department building.

The city employee arrived at the scene and identified Howe and Denny as the copper thieves. He estimated that the stolen wire is worth \$2,000.

Howe and Denney were taken to the Adult Detention Center and booked for larceny. Denney was also arrested for his outstanding warrant. Both Howe and Denney had preliminary hearings on March 23.

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