

Thieves snatching full recycling bags

By Kathryn Reed

Something that wasn't anticipated when South Tahoe Refuse's blue bag recycling program started earlier this year was the value people would see in the full bags left at the edge of driveways.

People are stealing full blue bags to take out the material that is worth money. In fact, on one Tahoe Keys routes on Oct. 30 no blue bags were out. This wasn't normal.

A woman called STR reporting seeing a vehicle taking them.

The problem is then replacement bags are not left for customers. The other problem is not knowing where the waste that doesn't have a buy-back value might turn up " dumped somewhere or stuffed in a dumpster that a business then pays for.

"We caught one guy in the county who did it," said STR's John Marchini.

The thievery could be tied to the economy " people needing a way to get cash.

"Our volume has tripled or more at the buy back center," Marchini said of people turning in recyclables for cash.