

Commercial Property Building Coverage Is it Theft or Vandalism?

In the past several years, you have probably noticed the theft of copper wiring has become a very serious problem. This can occur not only in residential properties, but also in commercial buildings. When this happens, valuable copper wiring is ripped from various areas and structures are often left destroyed. The cost to replace the wiring and repair the structure can be very costly. At first blush, you might think the damages sustained would be considered vandalism, but that is not the case. The majority of damages sustained are the result of theft--- the theft of the copper wiring. So, if theft is an excluded cause of loss in your property form, this scenario could be a very costly out-of-pocket expense for you. Please allow me to elaborate.

When someone breaks into a building and steals copper wiring from the inside walls and/or from the air conditioning units, imagine the extent of damage sustained to the building in getting to the wiring and ripping the wiring out. All of that damage would be considered damage as the result of theft of the copper wiring. If your property form excludes theft, these damages would not be covered.

Do not confuse the above described damages with those damages caused when entry is gained into a building unlawfully or when exiting a building--- breaking out a window, kicking in a door, etc. Those damages are typically covered and are not subject to the theft exclusion.

Example wording that you should look for in your property policy to clarify this issue is as follows:

- Definition of Vandalism. "Vandalism, meaning the willful and malicious damage to or destruction of the described property. We will not pay for loss or damage caused by or resulting from theft, except for building damage caused by the breaking in or exiting of burglars."

The above definition tells us if the damage is caused by or results from the theft of the copper wiring then those damages would be considered theft. However, the breaking in or exiting of the building would be considered vandalism.

If you are not certain whether or not your property form excludes theft or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact your Agent.

Please contact your Hibbs-Hallmark & Company account representative for more information about Commercial Property Building Coverage.

Sincerely,

Michele Hall

Commercial Lines Claims Manager



Hibbs ♦ Hallmark & Company
Insurance Agency

Hibbs-Hallmark & Company

501 Shelley Drive

Tyler, TX 75701

(903)561-8484

www.hibbshallmark.com

info@hibbshallmark.com