NEWS RELEASE

Thanksgiving Cargo Theft Doubles from 2021 as Verisk CargoNet Warns of Fraudulent Hires and Data Center Hardware Being Targeted

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Key Takeaways

- In 2026, thieves continue to favor full truckloads of metals and data center computing hardware.
- Labor shortages and holiday absences make it easier for criminals to be hired online as drivers and dispatchers, and then use carriers' systems to steal shipments.
- There were 252 recorded cargo theft incidents in the United States during the Thanksgiving holiday periods from 2021 through 2025, according to Verisk CargoNet. The 2025 count of 58 was down from a peak of 79 in 2024 but twice the 29 recorded in 2021.
- The Tuesday and Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Monday after accounted for 62 percent of incidents and California, Illinois and Texas accounted for 56 percent of incidents, according to Verisk CargoNet.

JERSEY CITY, NJ, Nov. 24, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- - Verisk (Nasdaq: VRSK), a leading strategic data analytics and technology partner to the global insurance industry, today released its Thanksgiving cargo theft analysis and warning from its CargoNet business.

Verisk CargoNet recorded 252 cargo theft incidents in the United States during the Thanksgiving holiday periods from 2021 through 2025, with an estimated commodity value of about $23.9 million. Annual counts rose from 29 in 2021 to a five-year high of 79 in 2024, then fell to 58 in 2025.

For 2026, Verisk CargoNet is highlighting a growing scheme in which cybercriminals posing as drivers and dispatchers respond to carriers' job postings on social media, gain access to company email and phone systems, and use those systems to bid on and steal shipments in the carrier's name. Thieves also continue to favor full truckloads of metals and data center computing hardware.

Verisk CargoNet recommends that shippers, brokers and carriers tighten security and verification from Tuesday, Nov. 24, through Monday, Nov. 30.

"No single shipper, broker or carrier can see the whole picture, and the criminals count on that," said Keith Lewis, vice president of operations, Verisk CargoNet. "When one company spots a suspicious load, a fake dispatcher or a cloned carrier and reports it quickly, everyone else can benefit from it."

Verisk CargoNet's concern in 2026 is not only what is being stolen, but how criminals are gaining access to freight. Cybercriminals are operating under the identities of legitimate carriers, and a growing number are able to execute thefts through standard carrier practices.

252 incidents in five Thanksgiving periods, 2021-2025

Of the thefts recorded over Thanksgiving, three patterns stand out:

- 2025 count was twice the 2021 level. Annual counts rose from 29 in 2021 to a five-year high of 79 in 2024. The count fell to 58 in 2025, still twice the 2021 total.
- Thieves strike around the holiday, not on it. The Tuesday and Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Monday after accounted for 62 percent of incidents. Thanksgiving Day was the quietest, with 17.
- Activity is concentrated in a few places and products. California, Illinois and Texas accounted for 56 percent of incidents, led by San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties in California. Thieves mostly targeted food and beverage shipments, followed by household goods and electronics.

2026 Threat Picture: High-Value Targets and Fraudulent Hires

Cargo thieves in 2026 continue to favor full-truckload shipments of metals and the enterprise computing hardware used in data centers.

Targeted hardware includes fully assembled racks and computing platforms, and networking and security appliances. Thieves also target components such as fiber optic transceivers, central processors, graphics processors and memory chips

Through September 2026, the average documented value of a stolen shipment was $448,456, up 72 percent from the same period in 2025

Theft of unattended trailers and break-ins to parked trucks and trailers remain common.

Among the schemes of greatest concern to Verisk CargoNet this season are highly technical tactics in which criminals operate under the identity of a legitimate carrier. They compromise a carrier's email account, deceive a carrier already hauling a shipment into delivering it elsewhere, or buy an existing carrier's credentials.

Fraudulent hires and company sales: how criminals gain access to carriers' systems

In a fraudulent hire scheme, cybercriminals posing as drivers and dispatchers respond to job postings that carriers place on social media.

Once hired, they work to gain access to the company's official email and phone systems. They then use those systems to bid on shipments in the carrier's name and steal the freight.

Verisk CargoNet has traced reports of fraudulent hires to job postings that carriers had recently placed on social media. In most cases, the carrier hired the driver or dispatcher online without ever meeting the candidate.

Meeting candidates, conducting thorough background and reference checks, and validating their contact information may have prevented some of these cases, according to Verisk CargoNet.

Holiday short staffing makes these tactics more likely to succeed

Cybercriminals understand that short staffing around holidays can make these tactics more likely to succeed, according to Verisk CargoNet. Fewer people may be available to vet a new hire, verify a caller, or notice an unusual email.

These conditions can heighten the risk to freight transportation during the Thanksgiving period. Verisk CargoNet recommends that every party in the supply chain put additional security and verification measures in place.

"The groups behind these schemes are patient, and they plan around the calendar," Lewis added. "A carrier's email address and phone number are how brokers know who they are dealing with. Guard access to them the way you guard the keys to your trucks."

About the analysis: *Figures are incidents reported to Verisk CargoNet in the United States and do not represent all supply chain crime. The Thanksgiving analysis period runs from the Tuesday before Thanksgiving through the Monday after, 2021 through 2025, and incidents are counted by the date the incident began. Dollar figures are estimates. Data is as of Oct. 28, 2026, and counts for prior periods may change as reports are received.*

About Verisk

Verisk (Nasdaq: VRSK) is a leading strategic data analytics and technology partner to the global insurance industry. It empowers clients to strengthen operating efficiency, improve underwriting and claims outcomes, combat fraud and make informed decisions about global risks, including climate change, catastrophic events, sustainability and political issues. Through advanced data analytics, software, scientific research and deep industry knowledge, Verisk helps build global resilience for individuals, communities and businesses. With teams across more than 20 countries, Verisk consistently earns certification by **Great Place to Work**. For more, **visit Verisk.com** and the **Verisk Newsroom**.

Attachment

- **Verisk CargoNet's Thanksgiving Trends Report 2026**


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Verisk CargoNet's Thanksgiving Trends Report 2026

Verisk CargoNet Thanksgiving theft trends 2026: 252 theft incidents reported from the Tuesday before Thanksgiving to the Monday after, 2021–2025. Top states: California (83), Illinois (30), Texas (28). Top commodities: food and beverage, household goods, electronics. Top location types: warehouse/distribution center, parking lot, truck stop. Average documented loss value $155,253. Estimated total loss value $23,908,887.

Source: Verisk Analytics, Inc.