



Volume 15 Issue 2

October, 2005

WILL THE RISING TIDE OF ENERGY COSTS DRIVE UP ENERGY THEFT



SNAP RING LOCK

- ▼ Easily installed in seconds without tools or keys
- ▼ Case hardened rings
- ▼ Serialized for identification
- ▼ Accepts standard seals
- ▼ Utilizes patented McGard locking technology
- ▼ Unmatched corrosion resistance



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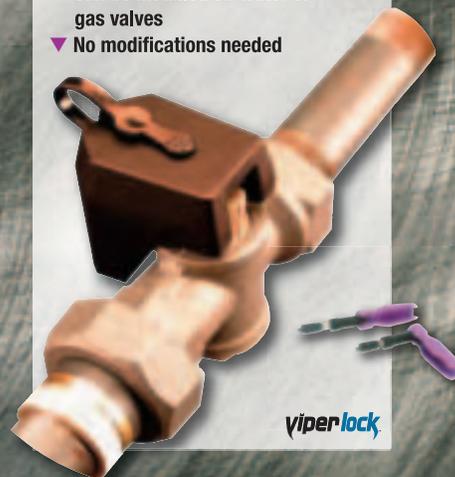
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**User friendly Tri Tool Key operates all three McGard electric meter lock styles and Viper Lock.*

Success on any major scale requires you to accept responsibility....In the final analysis, the one quality that all successful people have...is the ability to take on responsibility. –Michael Korda



Kurt Roussel
IURPA Chairman

I'm sitting here reflecting over my tenure as your Chairman thinking about the successes and failures that have happened over the last two years. I believe the reason that we're here, the very reason we do what we do, is that we, as professionals, understand the responsibilities that exist to protect and ensure the financial health of our individual corporations. I have yet to meet an "uncommitted" person in Revenue Protection. I don't believe they exist. Each and every member of the organization feels individually responsible to ensure the success of their programs. And the sad part is... we love what we do – and don't let the boss' know...we often have fun doing it!

Over the last two years, I've met, spoken to on the phone, emailed, faxed, sampled a few adult beverages with, or been in contact via other means, at least 200 people. And there is one simple commonality. They love what they do, and they accept full responsibility to ensure their unit's success. Then ...on top of that, they'll call another IURPA member to share (or boast) of their latest "find," tell them how they did it, so they can see if their company is having that problem.

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Responsibility...for success! Success for each and every one of us! We share the knowledge. It's a wonderful thing.

Next year, Jeff Cornelius will be the Chairman, and there will be nothing but success for the organization.

Ray Croft, Greg Lee, and Gary Signorelli have agreed

to accept the responsibility for charting the course for IURPA. Itzick Michaeli will now serve as our Middle Eastern Liaison, joining Luis Arruda in South America. David Bown now serves as our United Kingdom Liaison. It is in great hands!

I have yet to meet an "uncommitted" person in Revenue Protection.

As I write this, the Gulf Coast and New Orleans are recovering from the rage of Hurricane Katrina. Earlier that day, I saw that Entergy has created a fund to assist their employees and neighbors, and funded it with one million dollars. Entergy has dedicated its website to have up-to-date information on their restoration efforts. I'm proud to say, emails went throughout the Board regarding making a donation to assist the people. I requested the Board approve a \$1000 donation, it was quickly seconded, and the check has been sent.

Cliff Green provided me with information from his parent company that 60% of their employees at a plant in Louisiana have had no contact with the company since the storm. The company wanted to notify them they would continue to provide wages and support to their employees during this tragedy.

IURPA exists to provide support to our members, their utilities, and their employees. It was totally natural for us to provide support to our co-workers in the industry. Over my tenure, IURPA has accepted the responsibility to provide financial support to our regional groups, provide assistance to members as requested, and, for what I'd like to be remembered for, to quote Dr. Martin Luther King, "I'd like to be remembered for trying to help somebody."

Peace.

REPEAT OFFENDER

By ALBERT MORALES • CITY OF GARLAND, GARLAND, TEXAS

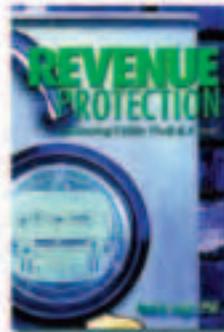
My name is Albert Morales and I have worked for the City of Garland for over 12 years 6 in bill collecting and 4 1/2 in revenue protection. This department was a single man show up until about a year and a half ago when the department showed the numbers from the program and requested an extra position. The numbers from spoke for themselves and we were fortunate enough to receive two extra investigators at the time. The main reason I touch on this point is because of the combined effort it took of all investigators on a residence that we discovered tampering on. On June 24, 2004 after doing some research into our low consumption report one of our investigators notices that a particular address shows low usage for the month but could not really pinpoint the problem on the screen therefore he went out to the address to check the accuracy of the meter and any other problems. As he arrived to the meter everything looked normal so he proceeded to look into the meter base. Promptly our newly trained investigator notices extra wires inside the meter base and requests some assistance. My supervisor happened to be riding with me that day when the call came in so we went to the address. After further review and some extensive looks into the mans breaker panels in the home we discovered the rewiring of the meter base to bypass all his air conditioning load and some light load on an extra breaker panel. The lady of the house was notified of the situation and the electric was disconnected. An hour later the husband comes in to the office and requested to talk with someone. At the time of some questioning I could never make him admit to the rewiring but I advised him that our policy states that the person receiving benefit is responsible for any charges. The man agreed to pay his tampering charge and his reconnect fee at the time and was advised that a back bill could be in the works an not to let it happen again. On May 18,2005 after reviewing our low consumption report one of our other investigators happens to see the mans account back on low usage. With previous history of theft our investigator promptly makes a trip to the customers address. At first glance the meter looks intact and actually tests accurate with our load test but he was not done yet he started feeling around the meter cover and by chance felt a small pin hole on the side of the meter. For the second time I received the phone call and advised of the situation and the investigator told me what he was going to do and also advised the lady of the house. Like clockwork the man showed up at the payment center and was dispatched to my office. He was originally quoted a reconnect amount of 315.00 and was

coming in to pay but little did he know we treat repeat offenders with a little more care. He walked into my office took a seat after refreshing his memory of our conversation one year ago I asked him if he remembered of the back charges we discussed and he did agree to that. I proceeded to show him a file that had been sitting on my desk since we caught him last time and that his old amount of 315.00 had just taken an increase. He about fell out of his chair when the amount of 2624.22 was given to him. He admitted to his second mistake and was made to pay 1000.00 that day for reconnect and is now going to have to pay the remainder of the balance. I believe the last words I told the customer were "it does not pay to steal from the City of Garland", he agreed. I want to give credit to our two other investigators that help run the department their names are Cesar Rodriguez and Jack Reid and let the thieves know out there--we catch you once we'll catch you again so don't try it.



Albert Morales

You Can't Afford Not to Read This Book



Revenue Protection:
Combating Utility Theft
& Fraud by Karl Seger
ISBN 1-59370-039-3
Fall 2005/\$79.00 US

In this new book by noted security expert Karl Seger you'll learn:

- How to establish a revenue protection program or improve an existing one
- Methods to identify customer fraud and billing errors
- How to make these plans work for any size utility

This how-to book includes a number of appendices with sample investigative reports, sample web pages, and more.

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REVIEW OF REVENUE PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS IN THE UK

By A. Dick

This article is a summary of a presentation given at the IURPA/SURPA/SCRAPA meeting in Orlando on 16 June 2005. The Review described applies to both the gas and electricity markets, but the article itself is restricted to the latter.

Background

In the UK there is full retail competition in electricity supply, and customers have a choice of supplier, at the domestic level being able to change supplier every 28 days if they wish. This retail choice was introduced in 3 phases in 1990 (above 1MW customers), 1994 (above 100 kW) and 1998 (all customers). Prior to the last phase, Revenue Protection (RP) activity had not been impacted – there is not considered to be a significant problem with large customers - but in the run up to opening of the domestic and small commercial markets it was concluded that special arrangements might be required to deal with electricity theft.

there is no one 'utility' which suffers losses from theft in the traditional way.

For instance, there is no one 'utility' which suffers losses from theft in the traditional way – the market comprises a number of interacting parties made up of competing suppliers and franchised network operators. Because of the way in which the market processes work (particularly the metering arrangements), theft by a customer involving slowing of or bypassing the meter means that

- The supplier of that customer pays only on what the meter registers hence does not pay full energy or network usage costs
- Energy costs are smeared across other suppliers in the area, who pay according to market share
- Network operators do not receive full Distribution Use of System (DUoS) income

When the theft is discovered, all this has to be unravelled and put right!

1998 Arrangements

In industry discussions just prior to 1998 it was agreed that the network operator was best placed to provide RP Services (RPS) as it had an incentive to recover otherwise lost DUoS income and operated in a specific geographic area. It would provide a basic service to all suppliers in its area, paid for through DUoS charges to them, and would operate to a RP Code of Practice. This allowed for extra services beyond basic detection (for instance negotiating to recover the value of stolen electricity) on a voluntary and transactional additional charge basis. Suppliers would be obliged to ensure that their meter reading and other agents reported suspected theft for investigation, but the RPS Unit reserved the right to follow up other sources. These arrangements were underpinned in Licence Conditions imposed on parties by the Regulator. At the time they were put into place they were held up as a model for others who might be contemplating introducing competition, but over the next 4 years it became evident that there were problems.

What went wrong?

At 1998 there was not yet full separation of all supply and network businesses. This was achieved in the four years fol-

lowing and involved major organisational changes, necessitating re-writing of the Licences. Unfortunately the requirement to provide RP services was omitted from the new Distribution Licence and one network operator ceased to do so and its Supply business took on the work. Two others had outsourced their metering services, with which RPS was traditionally allied, to an independent company. Hence by 2000 there were different arrangements in different areas, which did not align with the RP Code of Practice. At the same time 'leads' to RP Units from some suppliers diminished noticeably, indicating that the disincentive to report theft was too strong - it was easier to do nothing. Furthermore, difficulties were reported with the trading arrangements being able to deal with data on units recovered from identification of theft, as the reconciliation period of 14 months to 'put things right' was too short for long term theft and there were further problems if the customer had changed supplier (as was a common ruse to complicate investigations).

Regulatory Review

In early 2004 the UK Regulator (Ofgem) was persuaded to launch a formal consultation on the effectiveness of RP arrangements, both in the gas and electricity supply industries. As regards electricity, this confirmed the several problem areas above which needed review, particularly the financial disincentive on suppliers to report theft. Following a Workshop to which representatives of all interested parties were invited, the trade associations for suppliers and network operators jointly undertook to set up working groups – inviting representatives of the UK Revenue Protection Association to contribute - to review the arrangements and make recommendations to Ofgem for changes to address perceived deficiencies. Since then:-

- An Obligations and Incentives Working Group has been clarifying existing obligations in legislation and the Supply and Distribution Licences to ensure they convey 'the correct messages'. It is also developing a financial model to examine the exact impact of theft within the complex market procedures as indicated above, and will use this to propose an incentive scheme to redress the current imbalances.

- An Operational Interfaces Working Group has been examining the processes, particularly the exchanges of information necessary to identify and investigate theft. Much of this has been done through revision of the RP Code of Practice which has been expanded to provide guidance on such things as the manner in which investigations are conducted and the treatment of vulnerable customers. The Group has also been looking at how units lost to market settlement can more easily be 'put back in' when theft is discovered.

The Groups are due to report to Ofgem by the end of September, following which decisions will be made about changes necessary to improve arrangements for the future.

Information, including downloadable copies of Ofgem's consultation papers and presentations at the Theft Workshop may be found at www.ofgem.gov.uk under 'areas of work', 'theft'.



A. Dick

NEW ZEALAND - BANK ATM'S CONVERTED TO STEAL IDS OF BANK CUSTOMERS

By ROBERT HUCKEMEYER • CONSOLIDATED EDISON

A team of organized criminals are installing equipment on legitimate bank ATM's in at least 2 regions to steal both the ATM card number and the PIN. The team sits nearby in a car receiving the information transmitted wirelessly over weekends and evenings from equipment they install on the front of the ATM (see photos). If you see an attachment like this, do not use the ATM and report it immediately to the bank using the phone on the front of the ATM.

The equipment used to capture your ATM card number and PIN are cleverly disguised to look like normal ATM equipment. A "skimmer" is mounted to the front of the normal ATM card slot that reads the ATM card number and transmits it to the criminals sitting in a nearby car.

At the same time, a wireless camera is disguised to look like a leaflet holder and is mounted in a position to view ATM PIN entries.

The thieves copy the cards and use the PIN numbers to withdraw thousands from many accounts in a very short time directly from the bank ATM.



The equipment as it appears installed over the normal ATM bank slot.



The PIN reading camera being installed on the ATM is housed in an innocent looking leaflet enclosure.



Equipment being installed on front of existing bank card slot.



The camera shown installed and ready to capture PIN's by looking down on the keypad as you enter your PIN

USE A CHRONOLOGY TO ORGANIZE AND STRENGTHEN YOUR CASE

BY CRAIG BIALY

A chronology can be one of the most powerful tools at your disposal, to help ensure a successful investigation. Simply put, a chronology is a concise list, in chronological order, of all pertinent facts and events that help you quickly and confidently support your position on:

- The date(s) when a theft of service occurred.
- The amount of service that was diverted.
- Who was responsible for the theft.

A well conducted investigation should include thorough research, from multiple sources inside and outside your company to uncover as many important facts as possible about individuals, locations and events associated with a theft of utility service. A chronology helps pull all that information together, to put things in order and in perspective, and provides a brief summary of the overall investigation.

A good chronology, extracted from thorough research can tell a brief, to the point story of its own that may never become apparent while sifting through numerous, disconnected pieces of information. One problem with extensive research is that it often creates a pile of documents, field notes, records of telephone conversations and other information that can easily become unmanageable. While all that information is certainly important, it's nearly impossible to commit it all to memory. How often does an investigator find themselves in a discussion with a customer or their attorney, flipping through a huge file of documents saying "I know I have something about that in here, somewhere", but they can't put their finger on the exact document to support their assertion? That certainly doesn't present a very compelling argument! Re-enact the same scene, using a chronology, and it becomes a matter of simply scanning a one or two page document to find your supporting point. That brief summary will prove extremely informative to anyone opening up the file, whether it's your company's attorney reviewing the case for the first time or an investigator looking at it for the tenth.

Through trial and error, I've learned that Microsoft Excel is the best tool to prepare a chronology. I set it up using two columns: one for dates, the other for describing the events that occurred on those date. I set the second column as wide as the right hand margin, then use the "format cells" command to 'wrap text' on the 'alignment' tab. This format nicely presents a list of dates, accompanied by the corresponding information. The 'wrap text' feature allows me to enter as much text as I need, but keeps the dates perfectly aligned. It's easy to add new entries to the chronology, as well. After adding a new line at the bottom, I sort the sheet by the 'date' column to insert the new entry in the appropriate order.

Let me share one example of a successful theft investigation where a chronology helped secure a billing of over \$15,000 for four years theft of electric service - one that could have just as easily ended up a one-year, 'company error' recovery of \$3,000.

In May, 2003, I received a report from a meter mechanic of a jumpered, 3-phase commercial meter socket on a two-story medical office building, discovered while changing the meter in the adjacent socket. After paying a field visit to the site and measuring approximately 40 amps on each phase, my first concern was getting a meter set to monitor the actual use

and prepare to bill the customer. A visit to town hall revealed that the property was owned by Dr. B, who happened to be the customer of record since 1996 on the other meter that the mechanic had changed. I had a new meter installed and a second account set up for Dr. B within a couple of weeks.

While at town hall, I also learned from the building department that the second floor was added to the building during 1998-99. It made sense that the jumpered socket was probably serving the newly added second floor. By researching the company's distribution work request system, I found a work order to upgrade the electric service to the building. In September, 1998, the line department upgraded three pole mounted transformers and pulled in new, larger service wires to the building. Suddenly, a terrible scenario played out in my mind: Perhaps our line crew had jumpered the new socket, then the meter department dropped the ball over four years ago and never worked their order to set a new meter. This wouldn't have the first time in our company's history that something had slipped through the cracks and it would have been easy to assume it was the case here. If that had been the case, state regulations would have limited our recovery to one year's use, without interest charges, for a little over \$3,000.

I reviewed the meter service order history, half expecting to find a meter set order that had gone unworked. Instead, I learned that the customer's meter had been changed twice - once in February, 1998 for a regulatory-required 'periodic test' and again in May, 1999 after the service upgrade. Neither of the mechanics performing the meter changes noted jumpers in a second socket - before or after the service was re-energized. In 1999, the second socket was there, but remained covered, waiting for a request to set a new meter, once the construction progressed to that point. The meter set order I was afraid I'd see was nowhere to be found.

The chronology bore it out - the town's building department had records of the work being performed. Contractors pulled permits with the town for the addition. The electrician submitted a request to our company and the service was upgraded. The town performed inspections and ultimately issued a certificate of occupancy for the new space. All the dates lined up. Unfortunately, the only thing missing was any mention of a new meter for the second floor, throughout the entire process. The customer (or more likely, his electrician) had obviously jumpered the new socket to power up the second floor.

As you might expect, the customer tried vehemently to argue that our company had dropped the ball, once he was presented with a \$15,000 bill for unmetered use and interest charges. But the strength of our case (including the chronology's factual representation) allowed us to prevail through some contentious legal negotiations and a regulatory complaint. The case was ultimately settled and the customer made six monthly payments to close the books on a successful investigation.



Craig Bialy

THE OL' WATERING HOLE

By JEFF HARRIS • MISSOURI GAS ENERGY

Welcome back to The Ol' Watering Hole. For you "first-timers", The Ol' Watering Hole is just one of those laid-back, hole-in-the-wall places where "us Revenue Protection Types" can get together to tell "war stories", and, basically solve the problems of the "revenue protection world" (o.k., well at least share stories).

For those of you who made it to the "grand opening" last time around, I have a bit of "unfortunate" news. Apparently, when it came time for someone to take care of this "round", everyone was in the bathroom, so you'll have to endure another one of my stories.

This past May, while working the day in nearby St. Joseph, Mo., I discovered a steel-pipe by-pass hooked up to a large, two-story duplex which had been converted into a single-family dwelling. Due to the gas line being located towards the rear of the building, it was not visible from the street. I shot a few seconds of video, took a couple of pictures, and returned to my vehicle to request a Serviceperson and one of "St. Joe's Finest".

Well, the Serviceperson arrived a few minutes later, and I advised him of the situation. I guess there must have been a vehicular somewhere in the city, 'cause the response time from the Police Department was definitely not something to brag about on that particular day. I told the Serviceperson that we ought to go ahead and remove the by-pass so that I didn't hold him up from completing his work. As we rounded the corner of the building, we happened upon the resident – bent over on the ground, wrench in hand, working as fast and hard as he could to remove the by-pass. I raised my camcorder, hit the record button, and said "Excuse me Sir; you want to put that wrench down?" He looked up, mouth wide open, and laid the wrench down on the ground (to this day, I couldn't tell you who was more surprised. Us, finding him that way, or him, looking up to see that he had been caught red-handed and on camera!). He stood up, mouth still wide open, and just stared down at the ground. I said, "I'm Jeff Harris with Missouri Gas Energy, and you obviously know why we are here". I then told him that the Police were already on the way, so he might as well just hang around. After a few minutes of staring (open-mouthed) at the ground, he stated that he needed to go inside to get some shoes on. We com-

pleted the shut-off, and I recovered the by-pass and wrench. When the Police Officer finally arrived, I told him what had happened, and turned the wrench over to him. When he knocked on the door and made contact with the resident, he held up the wrench and said "I guess this is yours", to which the resident (yes, still staring at the ground) mumbled a solemn "yeah". (The court date is pending)



Jeff Harris

While this does make a pretty good story, it is also a great reminder for Field Personnel and Investigators. When you discover potential evidence, recover and / or document it immediately. You never know what is going to happen, and once it's gone, you can't go back and get it.

The "volunteer line" is now open for anyone interested (or should I say willing) in taking care of the next round. If you have a story, suggestions, or even just a commentary that you would like to share, just e-mail it to me at jeharris@mgemail.com. Remember, the alternative is listening to me ramble on!

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REVENUE PROTECTION CONTINUES TO IMPROVE

By ROBERT HUCKEMEYER • CONSOLIDATED EDISON

In our efforts to follow the principles of the "The Way We Work", Revenue Protection "Improves Continuously". During 2004 we sought new ways to identify, prepare and field suspected theft of service cases. This process, by employing the services of Detectant Industries, is described as a new technology in our business that establishes scores for the results oriented Revenue Protection. The implementation of this software analysis tool has enhanced our billing and helped us exceed our billing goals for the year.

The system of analysis works as a set of software tools that when used together enable a continuously improving revenue assurance process. Its process includes:

- Study customer usage patterns (daily, weekly and monthly) and historical trends to build customer models
- Integrate data from multiple sources and process monthly statistics/scores
- Analyze all information to determine if an investigation is justified

- Collect information when performing investigations and evaluate reason for inspection
- Measure success against expectations and revise detection methods and strategies



Robert Huckemeyer

In 2005 Revenue Protection plans to take this new system to the next level. We plan to automate much of its cumbersome work functions to a Laptop Tablet format in an effort to streamline and speed up the billing process. This change will enhance other benefits as well. It will give us more real time data to work from in the field, encourage the use of computer technology in theft discovery and give all employees a sense of modernization and new frontiers to work with in our industry.

We will continue to improve in theft detection as some of our customers find new ways to steal. We plan on meeting the challenges that the future holds for our department.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO META?

By KURT W. ROUSSELL, ACTING PRESIDENT

People ask me, what's happening to META? I keep replying "stay tuned." As I mentioned in the last newsletter, I'm working on something. There is a lot of interest. Members, Vendors, Lots! I mentioned I'd be contacting the members to provide information for the upcoming website, and unfortunately, it's still in the design phase. My web designer is also ready for things to happen.

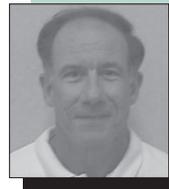
Things will happen, and they will happen soon. I promise.

But during this delay, I've been contacted by people throughout the industry who wish to help move META forward. By the time you read this, there should be an announcement of the new META Board. Once this is finalized, the website will be up and running and we will need your input.

Members and vendors put the next META conference in your budget now for 2006. It will be happen, and it will be big!



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META
OFFICERS

JUSTIFYING A REVENUE PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

By RAY CROFT • PACIFICORP

Often times getting executive management to understand the ongoing problem related to revenue protection is a big challenge. Just convincing them that the meter is the company's cash register can be an overwhelming job. So justifying a Revenue Protection Department and building a successful business case for one, becomes a monumental task. In more cases than not it takes persistence and a lot of patience. My personal experience of trying to get a Revenue Protection Department has been a long journey of many ups and downs.

The main perception from upper management on the subject of revenue protection, is when they hear anyone talking about it is solely "energy theft or tampering with the meter". It has been often relegated to a back burner because most assess the problem from the angle of risk management. Where to them most of our customers are honest good paying customers. The losses are looked upon as being insignificant, and to spend a lot of resources and money doesn't often add to the bottom dollar in their minds. Looking at it from their perspective, they are often correct in this assumption. If indeed you are only looking at energy theft and tampering cases it often doesn't make sense. This is where all of your time spent building a successful business case pays off.

Your job is to convince the company executives that revenue protection is more than just energy diversion and meter tampering. This can be accomplished once you have an audience with them explaining the "Revenue Protection Umbrella". What I mean by the "Revenue Protection Umbrella" is that revenue protection encompasses a whole lot more than just energy diversion and tampering.

First and foremost, what most executives seem to be focusing on is to find ways to reduce the liability in the safety arena. Making the subject of safety a part of the plan is crucial in convincing them that revenue protection is absolutely needed for the company. It is a known fact that any time a service is altered by other than qualified utility workers, it becomes a safety issue. Not only does it create hazards for our employees it creates dangerous hazards for the public and the customer. It becomes a huge liability when we have ignored these problems by not having inspection plans in place to police these activities.

The "Revenue Protection Umbrella" business plan needs to include both the technical and non-technical aspects of the process. Safety being number one on the list then theft of service, energy diversion, meter tampering, unauthorized reconnects,

subterfuge/identify fraud, mechanical failures and revenue losses due to metering errors. Including all of these will show huge revenue enhancements, plus help reduce the lost time due to accidents in the future. Encompassing all of these help make the business case and will show a great return



Ray Croft

on the dollar for the efforts made toward revenue protection. Some of these areas such as safety are hard to give a monetary value but the case needs to be made, so that peoples' lives and property are not exposed to the various hazards associated with theft of service.

Some companies feel that focusing on the safety aspect alone is enough to justify having a revenue protection department. If for no other reason providing a safe working environment for employees and considering the safety of our customers and the public, having a revenue protection policy and plan in place is well worth the effort. Last but not least you ensure energy delivered is accounted for, and our good paying customers are being treated fairly

3 ways to stop electricity theft in a few seconds:

RF Interrogated Check Meters

Universal Meter 2W, 3W, 4W Y & Δ, 120 - 480V.
0-6000 amps 50 or 60 Hz, read range to 500 ft.

Tap Detectors

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WELL TRAINED INVESTIGATORS ARE A MUST

By WAYNE WOHLER • LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF WATER & POWER

The Los Angeles Police Department had an individual under investigation for cultivation of marijuana. The investigation revealed this person had three residential locations that were being used for growing the plants. Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Revenue Security investigators were called in by the Los Angeles Police Department when the search warrants were executed.

All three locations were found to be growing marijuana and illegal wiring bypasses were uncovered as well. The Revenue Security investigators made thorough documentation of grow lights, air conditioning, filters, pumps, etc. and hours of operations the equipment had been operating. For safety the electric services at all locations were terminated.

Criminal felony charges for Theft of utility were filed along with cultivation for sale against the primary party.

LADWP investigators calculated the loss in excess of \$75,000.00. Supporting documentation was provided to the police to give to the district attorney.

The defendant had sufficient means to hire multiple defense lawyers. His defense team also hired two consultants, a cannabis expert from Europe, and an electrical engineer.

Multiple court appearances with the Department investigators giving testimony as to the basis of calculated losses were given. The contested billing was upheld in court and the Department received restitution of \$75,000.00. As part of a plea bargain with the district attorney the defendant paid the full amount to the Department prior to serving a mandatory 6 six months in jail instead of 3 years in jail.

The main point to be brought out by this case is the fact the Revenue Security investigators had been given the necessary training to withstand scrutiny in court. The Department of Water and Power has ongoing training in house as well as making sure the employees attend training provided in the regional revenue protection associations such as **WSUTA** and **IURPA**. I would encourage all utilities to have their revenue protection personnel attend the training sessions. They provide a vast resource of networking, a heads up of new methods of tampering found as well possible ideas to stop theft and recover revenue.



Wayne Wohler

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THEFT DETECTION AND WORKER SAFETY

By ROBERT HUCKEMEYER • CONSOLIDATED EDISON

Often times we take safety for granted when we are trying to identify theft of services conditions. Pulling live wires out of walls, remove unauthorized gas piping or just dealing with a couple of crack heads playing their radio with free juice, all dangerous life threatening work issues. All utilities have procedures in place to deal with normal inspection and repair of utility services and associated equipment. However, working on theft investigations confronts a completely different level of non-standard situations that may not have procedures in place. This is where common sense and proper planning need to be exercised. If we analyze each job and plan the work and work the plan, these dangerous daily conflicts could become a lot safer as long as we respect the energy.

What do we mean by "Respect the Energy"? Working safely !!! Every job we go to has risk involved. Improper wiring may be the cause of an unmetered service condition but it could also be the cause for a flash, short circuit or explosion and ultimately injury to the customer and or the utility employee. As utility workers we are trained to work safely, regardless of the job function. We should never put the job at hand ahead of our own well-being. Personal Protective Equipment is provided by your utility company to help keep you safe. Rules and phrases such as where your PPE at all times, test before working, work dead as alive. Simple but basic and should always be remembered before you start your job.

I had one employee working on a 7 jaw shunted socket meter equipment which was carrying a heavy load at the time of his visit. Because of the load the shunting device wouldn't release the meter from the sockets, it was also burnt out on one phase and the meter showed evidence of being damaged due to overheating, yet the customer still had service on all 3 phases. Instead of calling for help the brave employee decided to force the meter out of the meter equipment. By doing so he caused an arc and cross phase and subsequent explosion. He received first-degree burns on both his arms and face. He was not wearing a long sleeve shirt, nor was he wearing a face shield. He spent 6 weeks in the hospital and was unable to work for 6 months, all for the sake of getting the job done without properly planning and following the plan. This employee had 30 years of experience. Yet he thought he could get the meter out of the equipment without interrupting the customer's service.



Robert Huckemeyer

Being too comfortable at your job is just as dangerous as being uncomfortable. Taking short cuts and not following the proper procedures for working on live equipment is dangerous and too high risk.



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IURPA • 15 Years

The International Utilities Revenue Protection Association was founded in 1990 to protect member utility companies worldwide from revenue losses associated with unauthorized use of service. In fifteen years, the organization has grown from a small regional group into an association that includes representatives of more than 400 utility companies around the world.

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