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# REVENUE PROTECTION

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# THERE ARE DOGS THAT BARK AND THERE ARE DOGS THAT BITE..... DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE? (A TRUE STORY)



Jeff Cornelius IURPA Chairman

You are walking down a sidewalk or around the side of a building and you suddenly come face to face with an unfriendly dog! Are you prepared and do you know what to do if the dog makes an aggressive move toward you?

Peace River Electric Cooperative located in Wauchula Florida had such an incident, Meter Reader Joe Mackey working on 21 years of experience found him self in a very dangerous situation. It was a routine day and routine route that Joe has made for years. He knew the landscape by memory and where every meter on his route was placed. Unfortunately, something had changed from the previous month and Joe didn't know it. The following account is Joe Mackay's story that should be an eye-opener to everyone.

Joe pulled his truck into the yard and called to see if anyone was home. Not hearing an answer, he opened the gate and walked into the fenced area to take the month's meter reading. He knew there were three dogs within the fence; one Pit Bull and two Boxer dogs, one of which had recently had puppies. The dogs respected Joe and he respected their territory; he had never had a moment of trouble with them. What Joe didn't know was that, in between visits, a second Pit Bull dog had been added which changed the structure of the pack of the dogs. This set Joe up to be put into a dangerous scenario. Joe recalls the four dogs came from under a van and circled him. The male Pit Bull was the first to come toward him and as he lunged toward Joe, he hit the dog with his electronic meter-reading device, which momentarily stunned the dog. The second Pit Bull, the female, came running toward Joe and again Joe was able to fend off the female by sticking the meter-reading device in her month. Unfortunately at this point his luck turned as the first female Pit

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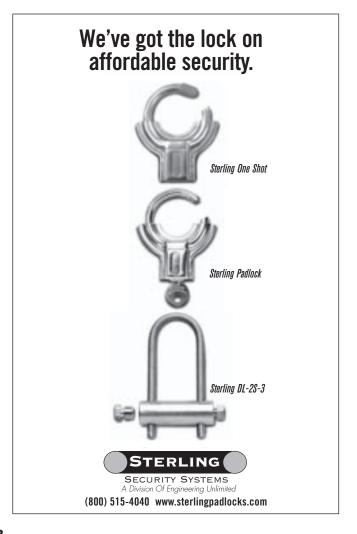
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Bull dog bit his right knee, the male Pit Bull dog was biting the left knee and one of the Boxer dogs was biting this right elbow. Joe says the recalls this whole situation was happening as if it were in slow motion. As Joe was fighting to not fall to the ground, he was able with his free hand to grab the collar of the Boxer and drop her. As she hit the ground and let out a loud yelp, the dogs let go of Joe and began to attack her. Joe was able to climb the fence away from the dogs.

Statistics show that every 40 seconds, someone in the United States seeks medical attention from a dog bite. There are approximately 800,000 dog bites per year that require some sort of medical treatment equating to almost \$165 billion dollars for doctor's visats. The majority of those victams are children and the environment where the bite occurs is on the owner's property. Dog bites account for 18 deaths per year and trends are indicating the number is rising.

As I close out my final article as Chairman of IURPA I would like to thank each and everyone of you for the honor of serving you these last few years, and look forward to continuing to support this organization in the future. Our organization is stronger than every, thanks in many parts to our past leadership, I am also very confident in the people that will follow me.



### THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE AMONGST IURPA Members

By Itzick Michaeli, Afula Regional Manager, Israel Electric Corporation

he mission of IURPA is to gather, share and relay information and knowledge between organization members, for the benefit of the members. Article 2 in the IURPA by-laws describes the organization's mission statement:

#### **Article II - Mission Statement**

The Mission of IURPA is to assist in the development and support of a global effort that addresses revenue loss incurred by utility service suppliers from a variety of sources which include, but are not limited to energy theft, fraud, unauthorized service, inaccurate or defective metering, and error thereby reducing the unfair financial burden placed on ratepayers. IURPA recognizes organizations that address these issues by providing value through a worldwide network for information gathering, training, sharing and promoting of revenue protection ideals.

During the 6 years of my membership and activity in IURPA, I have approached organization members regarding

various questions. The mechanism for relaying these questions is easy and simple - all that's required is to send the application via email to Woody Woodward who serves as IURPA's webmaster, and in a short time each member in the organization receives the question form. Now, all that the person who initiated the question has to do, is to wait patiently for an answer from his colleagues. And this is



Itzick Michaeli

exactly the problem I wish to present to you, dear colleagues. On occasion, the number of responses I receive are small.

Allow me to provide an example.

On April 10th 2006, I have asked the following questions:

- 1. What are the RP personnel to customer's number ratio in your company (figures please)?
- 2. What is the yearly theft of service estimation?
- 3. Are the RP units requested to prove cost effectiveness?
- 4. What happens when the goals are not reached?
- 5. Are the future revenues coming from "reformed" customers, calculated as a source of income?
- 6. What is your company incentives program?

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I received a total of 4 responses: 2 from the US, one from Hong-Kong and one from Bolivia. These responses were short, concise and beneficial, but they are not enough in order to form an opinion or present comparative data to the management. I cannot use such an insufficient knowledge base, when I want to present my company's senior management with various ideas, and to claim that I rely on professional working around the globe.

Truly, I was very disappointed. Is it that my colleagues in IURPA really don't have anything to say regarding the subjects I mentioned? I am certain that each and every one of you, dear colleagues, could pull an answer from the top of his hat.

During the last 3 years I have managed to initiate 2 important subjects, using the extensive information received from IURPA members in response to my questions. When I presented that information I collected from the many responses I received in regards to the use of a Check Meter, several such meters were purchased in an expedited process, and they have proved their economical rentability after only one month from the day they came into use. Another success was noted regarding yet another process of modification, when I presented information collected regarding the use of seals.

We deal with the protection of revenues, and we're lucky - we have enough work on hour hands, and that is good. Some of us usually work outside the office, and when we return, we only have a short time to sit and relax in front of our computer. First, we have to clean out spam mail, answer memos, answer our superiors' questions, write reports,

answer the phone and deal with other various assignments. No wonder that the task of answering this one mail, containing our question, which sometimes requires digging in material or formalizing of a question, is pushed to the back of the line. Sometimes, it remains unanswered or sent, and sometimes even thrown in the recycle bean.

Dear colleagues, fighting against energy stealing: there isn't and couldn't be any alternative to your and your organization's vast experience and knowledge. Even when the information comes from another continent, another state or culture, a different kind of society, different organizations and problems of a different scale, this information has great value. The relation created by answering that mail, will open the door for dialog and global working relations. As of now, I have had the pleasure of getting to know many colleagues by correspondence, after they have sent replies to my questions, from all over the world - the US, Britain, Jamaica, South Africa, Australia, Kazakhstan and Hong-Kong. I had the chance to meet some of them in conventions I participated, and with others I keep in touch by email.

In the majority of our organizations, people dealing with the field of revenue protection are being replaced, and their replacements need every piece of information in order to succeed in their new job. Please, invite them to join IURPA, and encourage them to use this wonderful tool in their disposal. And when you get a question in your inbox, remember that somewhere around the world your colleague needs and waits for an answer.



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#### THE OL' WATERING HOLE

By JEFF HARRIS • MISSOURI GAS ENERGY & JEFF MEYER • WE ENERGIES

Come on in and grab a seat towards the front 'cause we've got a special guest this month and he's servin' it up "Milwaukee style".

ay hello to Jeff Meyer. Jeff has been an Investigator for WE Energies since 1998. Prior to that, He spent eleven years as a Detective with the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, and eight years as a Polygraph Examiner for the Central Intelligence Agency. Jeff has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, and has also spent time as a



Jeff Meyer

Supervisor for a private security company that provided armed guards at Federal facilities throughout Wisconsin. In addition to all of these impressive credentials, Jeff is an all-around great guy. So, without further adieu, I'm honored to turn the floor over to Mr. Jeff Meyer.

I read the article written by Jeff Harris of Missouri Gas Energy regarding "Roll Call Training" in the April issue of the IURPA magazine. I would like to echo Jeff's sentiments by reiterating the importance of energy theft training for law enforcement officers. The Revenue Protection Unit at We Energies (Milwaukee) has been involved in police training for years, not at roll call sessions, but at annual in-service training classes.

In Wisconsin, certified law enforcement officers must complete a minimum of 24 hours of training every year to maintain their certification. Although training topics can vary, they usually include criminal law updates, self-defense and other typical police training. For years, We Energies investigators, in partnership with our local cable television company, have been presenting "Theft of Service" training to officers at suburban departments. As excited as we were to provide such training, we had difficulty obtaining approval to train the largest police force in our service territory: the Milwaukee Police Department, until this year. We immediately started to benefit from that opportunity.

We Energies, like most any utility company, are victimized by "customers" who are locked off for non-payment and repeatedly reconnect their service themselves. I am not talking about only once or twice; I'm referring to those who self reconnect 3-12 times in a matter of weeks. Many of these amateur reconnections (and arguably all of them) are potential safety hazards. In August 2006 my boss met with representatives of the Milwaukee Police Department, including the Chief, to explain the problems associated with self reconnections; we provided photos to illustrate how these amateur reconnects cannot be disconnected at the pole (electric), or the curb/lateral (gas), because they are connected to apartment buildings or duplexes with other active accounts.

As a result of these discussions, the police and Assistant District Attorney agreed to escort a Revenue Protection Investigator and Meter Servicer to these properties with amazing success. In fact, in addition to disconnecting these energy thieves again, the city issued citations and, in some cases, arrested offenders. The police became very involved because, not surprisingly, they found many of the energy thieves to



Jeff Harris

have outstanding arrest warrants and/or to have illegal drugs in their possession; these criminal violations in turn, led to additional criminal charges being filed.

Such success probably influenced the Milwaukee Police Department's decision to approve We Energies Theft of Service training during their 2007 in-service classes. We conducted two classes per day, 5 days a week for 7 weeks and trained approximately 1500 patrol officers and detectives of the Milwaukee Police Department. The feedback we received was a bit shocking; I was amazed at how many officers, many of them long time veterans, did not realize that stealing electricity or gas is a crime. A Wisconsin statute defines electricity and gas as "moveable property".

Now, the police and prosecutors are calling us asking to go to these properties receiving stolen energy. In one recent case an officer observed a suspect cutting up 80 feet of stolen underground transmission cable into slivers of copper to sell for scrap. The officer learned of our copper thefts through the in-service training and called the Revenue Protection number on a laminated card we handed to all officers at the training.

I agree with Jeff Harris that soliciting law enforcement assistance goes a long way in curbing energy theft. However, if you embark on this worthwhile endeavor, please understand that you must prove to law enforcement that these energy thefts are also violations of state law and in turn, crimes that jeopardize public safety. Also, it is pertinent to make it clear to law enforcement officers that your emphasis is on crime prevention and safety (you can handle the back billing and collection efforts internally). It may interest officers to know that providing t'em with leads to incidents of energy theft, which establishes "probable cause" for police to knock on a violators door, may lead to the discovery of other criminal activity. If you pitch the deal to where police officials see the mutual benefit that can be obtained through such collaboration you stand a much better chance of police buy in. Once you get police support just do what we have done, get out of the way and watch the show.

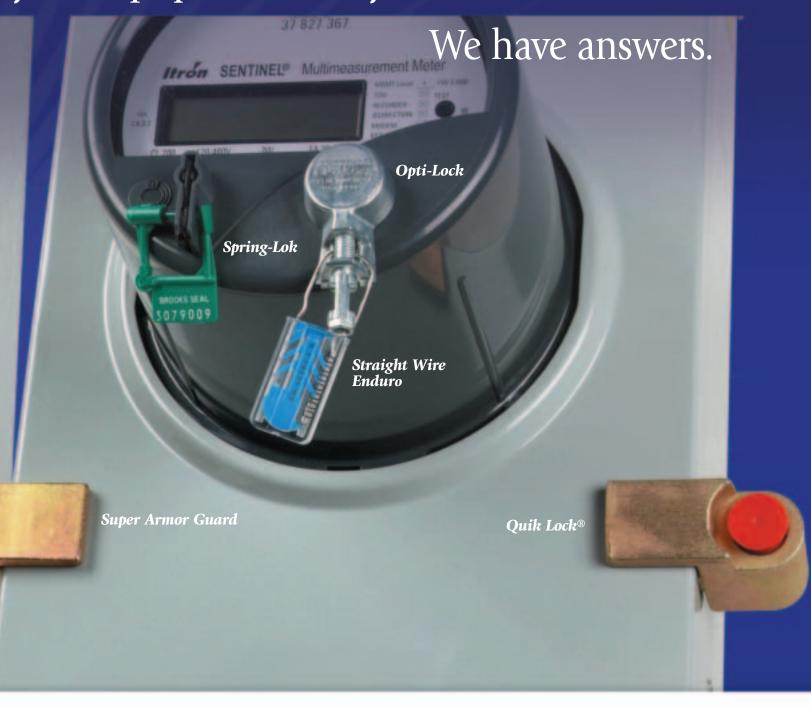
I'd like to thank Jeff for taking the time and effort to submit such a great article. Remember, this space is reserved for all of us, so if you've got a story, idea, or opinion that you'd like to share with the rest of us, just e-mail it to me at jeff.harris@sug.com.

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#### Message from the South African Delegate

By Manoj Hanuman • Chairperson: SARPA (KZN Branch)

t has been my greatest privilege to attend the IURPA 2006 Conference and to meet the lovely people of USA. After a tiresome flight from South Africa, upon arrival at New York at 7 am, I was detained by Immigrations for investigation. I was finally released some 3 hours later and missed my connecting flight to Connecticut. I had to wait a further 3 hours for the next flight and finally reached Connecticut at 4 pm that afternoon. It was a long gruelling 36-hour journey but was well worth every minute of it.

Although I did not enjoy the weather in Connecticut or New York, I did receive a very warm welcome from the IURPA & NURPA board members and delegates. The hospitality from both Utility and Associate members was overwhelming. I also had the privilege of travelling back to New York and spending a Sunday with Kurt Roussell (WE Energies - Milwaukee) and his family in New York. I extend my heartiest gratitude to every one for making my stay a comfortable and memorable one, and to Kurt and his family for their hospitality.

I was afforded the opportunity to speak at this event. This was totally impromptu and could I only give a brief overview of my utility, without any visual aids and talked of some of the challenges facing South African utilities.



#### REVENUE PROTECTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Electricity distribution utilities in South Africa are Municipal entities and profits derived from energy sales contribute to the running of the city. Whilst the larger utilities have between 600 000 - 1 000 000 customers, some of their smaller counterparts have as little as 5 000 customers.

Revenue Protection in South Africa is in general no different from that in the US. We have tampering and bypassing of meters, illegal joints before the meter and so on, except that we have some serious challenges of our own.

The legacies of our apartheid past has left South Africa with a shortage of formal housing within the City and surrounding areas and poor transport systems. This has resulted in an influx of citizens towards city centres.

Despite the continual efforts and progress of government and Municipalities in providing formal housing, there is still a shortage of affordable housing around the city centres which has lead to the establishment of Asquatter camps@ on municipal and private properties. These are shacks constructed of anything from mud to cardboard. Utilities will not provide services to these squatter camps as this will condone illegal occupation and will create squatter camps. Squatters therefore resort to theft of services from any



Manoj Hanuman

available source, be it street lighting, LV reticulation and individual customers service cables.

The wiring used is exposed, unsafe and very dangerous. Any available wire which includes twin flex, cab-tyre, car speaker wire, etc. is run on the surface of the ground, in shallow trenches but often exposed through part of its length, or sometimes suspended above the ground but often within arms reach of children. The joints are generally insulated by wrapping plastic shopping bags around it. There have been a large number of reported electrocutions of mainly children who have come into contact with illegal live wires.

Until late 2006, the South Africa Electricity Act provided for prosecution for the illegal use of electricity, however the law did not provide a presumptaon clause as in most US States. Utilities were therefore very reluctant to pursue criminal charges as these cases were generally dismissed due to lack of evidence. They would however pursue criminal charges in serious cases. The New Electricity Bill, which came into effect in 2006 and supersedes the Electricity Act, has omitted the provisions for the prosecution of illegal electricity users. Utilities now have to rely on their own electricity supply By Laws or Supply Agreement to pursue prosecutions.

Another major problem being experienced by African Utilities is the theft of conductor and other non-ferrous metals. The price of non-ferrous metals makes conductor theft very lucrative. The effects of stolen conductor runs into hundreds of Million Dollars per annum. A large percentage of this theft is by organised syndicates (possibly international syndicates) for export to other countries. The smaller percentage is by locals who sell to the local scrap metal dealers.

Laws have recently been amended to better control the buying and selling of non-ferrous metals. The Non Ferrous Theft Combating Committee (NFTCC) is a national committee that was formed in 1993 to plan, initiate and coordinate national strategies against conductor theft.

Prepaid metering was first introduced in South Africa in 1990. These electronic meters were thought to be the solution to our problems. It was not deemed necessary to seal these meters and manufacturers did not provide sealing facilities on these meters. Utilities went on extensive electrification drives at low subsidised installation costs. The meter was installed inside the house, which allowed the customer easy access to enter his credit, this however made it convenient to the customer to tamper with. This also

created a problem in accessing faulty and tampered meters. The first prepaid meters had a high fault rate, some had design flaws and innovative customers learnt how to tamper with these meters. One example of an innovative thief is where one particular type of meter had an exposed main switch, which would trip when the meter ran out of credit. A thin sewing needle could be forced into the switch near the toggle, which would hold the contacts in in the closed position thus prevent the switch from tripping out. This obviously spread like wild fire and became a very popular form of tampering.

Utilities have spent millions on door-to-door meter audits and meter change outs to overcome this scourge. Other types of meters with internal main switches, anti-tamper switched, etc. were tried and tested. Some have failed, others have stood the test of time but the best thus far has

been the split type meter where the reticulation is overhead. The meter is installed up on the pole and has a keypad with an lcd display, which is installed in the dwelling. One would have to get up the pole to tamper with the meter. The tampering with these meters is minimal. However, due to the costs of meters, some utilities have resorted to alternate methods such as installing check meters as the point of connection. Tampers and failure would be detected by discrepancies in the purchases increment of the check meter.

Through the efforts of the South African Revenue Protection Association (SARPA), in the sharing of information, the promotion of new technology and the facilitation of training, its members are being better equipped to manage their revenue protection programs.

#### "Don't Abandon Your Meter Readers!"

By Eddie Fee Jr., Revenue Protection Specialist • Orlando Utilities Commission

his case of electric utility theft is an example of the risk in lost revenue many utilities expose themselves to in employing AMR technologies and abandoning the indispensable, monthly service inspections by a Meter Reader.

The case, dated in 2006, involves a residential account in an upper/middle class neighborhood where the customer on record had owned the home since 1973. An electro-mechanical AMR electric meter was set at this premise in July 1998 and there had been no service order or meter reader activity since that involved a visual inspection of the meter. In April 2006, a Meter Technician visited the address to check the operation of the AMR module and found a large set of magnets (tightly wrapped and tied in heavy canvas) underneath the meter attached to the base. These magnets were extremely powerful and were difficult to remove from the front of the meter base. The paint was completely worn off the front of the meter base where the magnets were found and the strength and weight of the magnets had significantly indented the base as well. It was very observable the effect the magnets had on the meter disc when we removed them from the base. Also, the bottom side of the meter disc had heavy rub marks and scratches from the long-term use of these magnets. Based on these observations, I believe that this meter probably did not operate at all under light load conditions and was significantly slowed under moderate to heavy load conditions.

Because of the magnet placement on the customer's meter base, we were unable to duplicate this when testing the meter in our shop. However, a new meter at the address showed a consumption rate of 80kwh/day-the customer's current rate of consumption on the tampered with meter was for only 8kwh/day. Furthermore, the customer had never been billed for more than 30kwh/day in any single month since our billing records began in May 1998.

Upon interviewing residents of the home, I found out that the customer on record was actually deceased a few years

previous and his elderly wife was the primary resident and responsible for the utility bill. Her daughter and son did not reside at the residence and were not responsible for paying any of the bills and had no knowledge of the tampering. Based on the above information and other factors, it was my determination that the deceased husband most likely used the magnets before his pass-



Eddie Fee, Jr.

ing and they were never removed from the base-significantly reducing the bill the entire time.

An extremely conservative calculation of un-metered electric consumption totaled over 100,000kwh or about \$13,000.00. Unfortunately, our company decided to settle for a lesser amount due to concerns of actually collecting the full amount and other factors specific to the case. However, this is a good lesson to utilities that have or are thinking about completely abandoning visual meter reads for AMR/AMI technologies. It is much more difficult to detect meter tampering and illegal taps when you have no personnel to actually see the service. It is my recommendation that, unless your theft department has an effective way of analyzing consumption reports, some sort of inspection of AMR electric services be done at least once every 2 to 3 years. If a regular inspection had been done on this service, the magnet left on this meter base would have been discovered much sooner and therefore minimized the potential loss for the company.

Eddie Fee has been with the Orlando Utilities Commission for nearly 9 years, holding positions as a Meter Reader, Field Service Technician, Meter Technician II, and currently as Revenue Protection Specialist. Since he began as a Revenue Protection Specialist his efforts have led to increased revenues for his company.



#### **INDOOR GROW HOUSES-A GROWING PROBLEM**

By BILL Waters, Investigator • Georgia Power

#### Excerpt from the United Nations World Drug Report, page 17-

"A total of 82 countries explicitly reported the illicit cultivation of cannabis on their territory over the 1995 - 2005 period. In addition, Member States identified 134 source countries for the production of cannabis. Moreover, 146 countries reported seizing cannabis plants over the 1995 - 2005 period, which is an indirect indicator for the existence of cannabis plant production in a country, as cannabis plants are usually not trafficked across borders ( only the end- products are). Combining these data suggests that cannabis production is taking place in at least 172 countries and territories." (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007 World Drug Report. Ed. Sandeer Chawla, Thibault Le Pichon. < http://www.unodc.org/pdf/research/wdr07/WDR\_2007\_1.1\_overview.pdf >

**S** o, can we assume that the country that we work in is one of these? I would say there is an extremely good chance.

Hi, all. My name is Bill Waters, Investigator for Georgia Power Company in Atlanta, Georgia, United States. I have been with Georgia Power Company for 35 years, and have held the title of Investigator for 13 years.

In Georgia, we have seen a dramatic rise in discovery of illegal indoor marijuana grows. From January to June of 2007, there have been more than 100 indoor grows found and dismantled, and numerous arrests have been made. In almost all cases, there was theft of electricity involved.

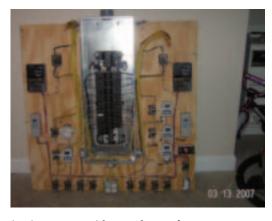
Indoor grow houses are becoming the marijuana production method of choice, I believe, for three main reasons. First, the product is grown in the country that it will likely be consumed in, without worry of transporting across borders. Second, the product quality is generally higher, due to better climate and fertilization controls. Third, they are harder to detect than outdoor grows

#### Why Theft of Service?

In the indoor grow houses that I have seen, the plants were typically started from seeds using fluorescent grow lights. Once the plants reached a specific height or maturity, they were transferred to a large plastic grow pot, and arranged in rows under incandescent lights (usually high pressure sodium bulbs). These incandescent lights, along with the corresponding ballasts that are needed, consume large amounts of electricity and generate heat causing the temperature to rise in the grow room. Additional air conditioning units are installed to control the temperature rise. The incandescent lighting, ballasts, and additional air conditioning units are the main power consumers in these operations. The amount of electricity consumed to run this equipment would be highly unusual for a house or home, and would draw unwanted attention. In order to keep this electricity from registering on the meter, a tap is made in the power supply cable ahead of the meter. Loss of revenue can exceed 50,000 KwH per month.

#### **Identifying an Indoor Grow**

The best scenario is, of course, to be notified by local law enforcement that an indoor grow has been discovered. This brings the utility investigator in after the criminal element has been removed. However, the downside to this is that the grow may be dismantled before the utility investigator arrives. The utility investigator can get more accurate readings/estimates on illegal power consumption if they arrive on the scene before the grow is dismantled. Therefore, it is important to



keep good communications open with your law enforcement contacts, helping them to understand why you as the investigator need to be notified as soon as possible.

Field Representatives for your company can be given information to help identify illegal indoor marijuana grows. Be sure to instruct them to use extreme caution if they feel that they have spotted an indoor grow, and to leave the area immediately. Some of the common traits of an indoor grow house that we have seen here are:

- House usually has a basement, and a rear deck.
- Typically, power is fed into the house from an underground service.
- The house backs up to unimproved property, a wooded area, field, or even a transmission line. Often located on a cul-de-sac.
- A privacy fence is constructed around the house soon after the new tenants arrive.
- A privacy fence is constructed around the area where the air conditioning units are located, either on the side of the house or beneath the rear deck.
- There is much more air conditioning available than is typically needed to cool the size of house in question. Many times a commercial size air conditioning unit is used.
- Additional exhaust vents have been added to the house.
- There may be a strong, pungent unusual odor noticed around the house.
- You might notice signs of digging directly below the meter on an underground fed service.

Indoor grow houses can be found through good observation. Case in point: An investigator for a local power utility company was walking their dog through the neighborhood they live in. They had recently been involved in investigating several cases of power theft at homes that were also used for indoor marijuana grows, and knew what to clues to look for. A few houses away from where they live, they spotted a house that fit the profile. The next day, the investigator looked at their company's database to see if there were more indications that fit the profile. There were. They then called local law enforcement with the information that they had, and a warrant was obtained. This was a major indoor marijuana grow drug bust. After investigating the loss incurred due to theft of electricity, it was estimated that there was nearly 10,000 KwH per month of illegal usage. (Name, company omitted due to ongoing investigation).

#### **Supplying Company Information to Law Enforcement**

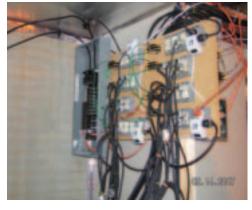
This is an area where it is critical that you proceed with caution. Obviously, it is a benefit to be able to assist law enforcement and keep your contacts fresh and willing. However, if information supplied to law enforcement or the Prosecuting Attorney is acquired in the incorrect manner, it could be inadmissible in court, weaken the case against the suspect(s), or even place your company in a legally liable situation. Therefore, be sure to have legal documentation in hand for any information released. This documentation is usually a subpoena (in the United States), or an official letter of request. I strongly suggest that you contact the legal department for your company before releasing any proprietary information.

#### Are Indoor Marijuana Grows Dangerous?

In order to correctly address this issue, it should be considered that Field Service Representatives are entering all types of situations in order to get proper readings from the meters. Most of the time, any dangerous locations are either flagged or are not recognized as being dangerous. Indoor marijuana grow houses would fall into the unknown danger category, since, if it were known it would already have been reported to law enforcement. As for the investigator that is working the case on the indoor grow, there are some cautions, as follows:

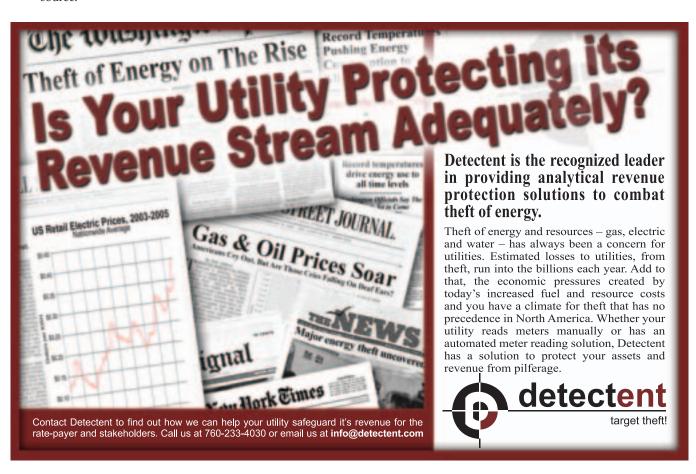
- Be aware of air quality inside the grow room. Growing marijuana typically creates mold, which can cause harm if inhaled. The chemicals that are used to fertilize the plants can be highly toxic.
- There can be a fire hazard, due to improper electrical wiring, or dried plant material coming into contact with the high pressure sodium bulbs, or any heat source.

 Be aware that suspects could arrive on the scene while vou are there. particularly if law enforcement is not present. Or, if you are dealing with what you hope is a vacant house, recognize that there may still



be someone with a key that is connected to the grow house, and may have entered prior to your arrival.

- Watch for electrical shock or electrical explosion hazards due to improper wiring and overload conditions.
- There is a possibility of traps in the house, in the grow room, or around the house. Remember, the occupants likely used the product that they grew, and paranoia is one of the side effects. There are reports of growers having been robbed of their product and cash, giving additional motive for creating traps. Fish hooks hung at eye level using fishing line, weapons set to discharge by trip wire, holes dug into the ground that are covered to look smooth would be a few ideas. For this reason, it is always best to wait until law enforcement has made a thorough search of the house and surrounding area.



#### WHAT IURPA MEANS TO THE LOS ANGELES DEPT OF WATER AND POWER?

By Wayne Dickinson, Revenue Security Unit • Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

hrough the years of being a member of IURPA, I have met many interesting, knowledge-able, helpful, and very nice dedicated people from other utilities, both inside and outside the United States. These people have a love for their work in the Revenue Protection area, and a desire to make things better for their company unlike anything I have seen in my 35 years in the utility business.



Wayne Dickinson

By attending the different conferences through the years and by networking with other utilities, we have been able to teach and educate our management on many different fronts that affect our business and our customers. Because of IURPA, we have a commitment to keep our system locked up while switching to AMR, to prosecute utility thieves when needed, and to look for ways to cut costs. We also educate our law enforcement on the laws affecting the utility business, and assist local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in performing their jobs. Personally, I have attended many classes through IURPA regarding safety -- from dogs to various hazards of working around drugs and

hardened criminals.

My special thanks go to Cleve Freeman, who I met many years ago at IURPA. When the call went out for help, Cleve, who worked for Southern California Gas Company at the time, assisted to help find the suspect who had severely assaulted one of our employees in our Revenue Security Unit. That person was prosecuted and received five years in prison. Without IURPA, we would never have met.

I cannot stress enough my thanks to all of the vendors that support IURPA. They have always been helpful in meeting our needs and have always been there for LADWP. They have worked hard on a number of projects we have had through the years. For some they were more than just a face, but became a friend. Without them, IURPA would not be here today.

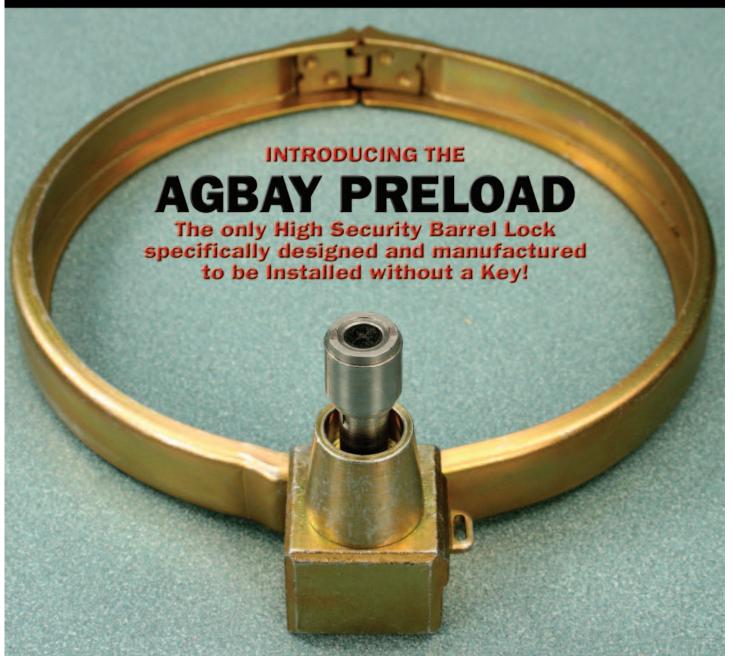
Lastly, I would like to thank the past, present, and future board members of IURPA for your hard work, and I'd like to thank Woody for always keeping us informed during the year. Everyone's dedications have made IURPA one of the best organizations I have been a member of.

On June 1, 2007, after 35 years of service at Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, I have retired.

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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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