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April, 2008

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**WE AS REVENUE
PROTECTION PROFESSIONALS
HAVE A DIFFICULT JOB.**



Greg Lee
IURPA Chairman

I would like to address a few issues which I think impact our industry as well as our personal lives and the well being of our customers.

First and foremost is SAFETY. Electrical safety impacts everyone. We have become so dependant and accustomed to electricity that we take it for granted. We walk into a room and flip a light switch and expect the light to come on. We expect a warm or cool house and never think about what it takes to make those appliances operate. Electricity makes our lives much easier and unfortunately we sometimes forget how dangerous electricity really is.

We as Revenue Protection Professionals have a difficult job. We not only deal with individuals stealing our product but they leave a variety of unsafe conditions behind. When going to a location we must be aware of our surroundings, who is watching, what kind of danger may be present in the meter socket, where is the Pitt Bull tied up? After all this comes our safety equipment to complete our task safely, while we are continuing to monitor our surroundings. It is very difficult to juggle these tasks at the same time but the professionals we have across our industry do it on a daily basis with remarkable success.

The electrical industry has come along way with how we meter our product and I expect this year to be no different. The world of technology is here and like computers, technology changes every day. Our meters and equipment are smarter, they can provide us with so much information that it takes time and effort to sort through the data before we can actually use it. The down side to this is the realization that those who want to steal our product are getting smarter as well.

While talking with Revenue Protection Professionals across the world I hear about the complexity with the way our systems are being compromised. In today's environment there are more than the usual jumpers or stolen meters being found. Meters are

found with different chips installed, they are found reprogrammed or rewired, just to mention a few situations. We need to rely on our systems to detect theft and have credible information with fewer resources in the field.

There are many metering systems around our country and the world which brings me to the next topic. IURPA consists of more than a few conferences during the year to catch up on the latest news. This association is in operation throughout the year. We are made up of Revenue Protection Professionals from a variety of utilities all over the world. There is an abundance of knowledge and thousands of years of experience within our group. All types of utilities and metering systems are within this association. Our challenge is to share with members our experiences, issues, what works, what doesn't work and most importantly, to be honest about it with one another. As we all embark in this new world of technology we have a great opportunity to make a difference for our industry, our companies and our Association.

The conferences planned around the world for 2008 provides a valuable tool for training, networking, picking each others brain, and to understand what is happening in other utilities.

I look forward to serving IURPA as Chairman in 2008, I have a difficult task ahead to try and measure up to the all the former Chairmen but with their help I know we can continue to be successful.

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2008 IURPA/META CONFERENCE

The 2008 IURPA/META combined Conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, May 14th through 16th at the Embassy Suites Plaza Hotel. Every room is a two-room suite, all Hotel guests will be invited to take advantage of an included “cooked-to-order” Breakfast each morning and a cocktail reception each evening, and the Hotel has just gone through an entire interior renovation. The Hotel has extended a special room rate of \$134 per night (plus taxes) and will be the responsibility of attendees to reserve. The cost of the Conference will be \$250, with a \$350 fee for Vendor Booths. For those of you bringing a “significant other”, they may attend the two Products and Services Displays with you for an additional \$100 fee. The Hotel is located just blocks away from first class shopping and dining in the Plaza area, as well as the nightlife in the historical Westport area. We’ll get things kicked off with early registration and a Vendors sponsored Products and Services Display on the afternoon of the 13th. The tentative Agenda includes the following topics: Contracting out your disconnects (Tommie Gray – Ameren); Criminal prosecution- case file preparation and use of Municipal Courts (Jeff Meyer – WE Energies and Jeff Harris – MGE); Courtroom testimony and demeanor in criminal and civil proceedings (Beth Murano – KCMO City Prosecutor); results of a comprehensive Revenue Protection Survey (Dennis Hurrst – Duke Energy); and an 8 hour block of training provided by Instructors from the



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META EXPERIENCES NEW BIRTH

By KURT ROUSSELL • WE ENERGIES

After a short period of inactivity, the Midwest Energy Theft Association (META) has experienced a new birth. After a couple of years without holding an annual conference, last year, the Board and officers of META tried “something new,” and it paid off. This meeting, a one-of-a-kind joint conference with the National Association of Credit Managers (NACM) Gateway Region, was a great success, and benefited the needs of the participants. In essence, there was a “cross pollination” effect, in that some Credit & Collections issues are closely related to Revenue Protection issues, and new ideas and

I see new processes and ideas where Revenue Protection professionals can play a significant role. New technology is coming our way.

perspectives were developed.

This was no small task, and it was a labor of love for the new META President, Jeff Harris of Missouri Gas Energy. As some of you may be aware, I was stricken with some serious health issues, and Jeff was bound and determined to have a META conference. A team was created by Jeff Harris, consisting of Jeff Meyer of We Energies, Paul Unruh from ComEd, Rich Brennan from Inner-tite, Dave Denham of People’s Gas. As I sat on the sidelines watching everything take shape, it was comforting to me to see people who are still enthusiastic about shaping the face of META and the Revenue Protection industry. As all great ideas eventually degenerate into work, this group of people rolled up their sleeves and “Got Her Done!” META is hopeful of having joint conferences with the NACM in the future.

This dedication to the cause led to Jeff Harris serving as President, Jeff Meyer as Vice-President, Paul Unruh as Secretary, and Dave Denham as Treasurer. I have been banished off to the role of President Emeritus, which means, I’m out to pasture (until they need an article for the newsletter). The organization is in good hands.

The 2008 IURPA-META joint conference will be held May 14 – 16, 2008 in Kansas City, Mo. The conference committee has put together an informative agenda, including a certification program from the Kansas City Police Department Leadership Academy on communications concepts. This will be beneficial for anyone who investigates and interviews as part of their duties. This means YOU!

IURPA will be providing 2 international delegates to give presentations on the state of Revenue Protection in their countries. Often, we think we have to deal with some issues, and it is eye opening to learn what happens in foreign lands. Tommie Gray of Ameren will provide invaluable insight to his using an outside agency to perform disconnections, and Dennis Hurtt of Duke Energy will report on the Revenue Protection Survey which is being distributed to members at the time of this writing.



Kurt Roussell

What looms on the horizon for us? From my vantage point, everything! I see new processes and ideas where Revenue Protection professionals can play a significant role. New technology is coming our way. Why??? Because our companies could not predict human behavior at the same pace we did because they don’t have the same experiences. Case in point, your friend and mine... AMR!

The new corporate buzz word is Meter Data Management Systems (MDMS). Keeping it simple, what the MDMS does is store all of the AMR related data so that metering “anomalies” can be more quickly detected. Why??? If my memory serves me correctly, every Revenue Protection professional I ever met was concerned about the loss of the “eyes in the field,” but our company leaders were told that AMR would combat theft. Needless to say, the un-monitored cash registers on the sides of your customer’s homes have been tampered with – with increasing frequency – and without any electronic way to monitor these “metering abnormalities,” these thefts often would go undetected. It is up to you to monitor what new initiatives are taking place in your companies and make sure Revenue Protection is represented during the planning and decision making process. Be prepared to participate in the discussions on what features and programming will be required to support you on your mission to catch a crook.

A key initiative at my organization was to incorporate our customer identification and verification process (Positive ID) into our Revenue Protection organization. Key to the integration of the program was the inclusion of new technology into customer verification. This took some changing of our corporate culture and philosophies. We have now fully integrated their operation into Revenue Protection and deriving significant financial benefit while reducing fraudulent attempts to establish service.

I hope that each and every one of you has a productive and prosperous year, and I hope to see you in Kansas City.

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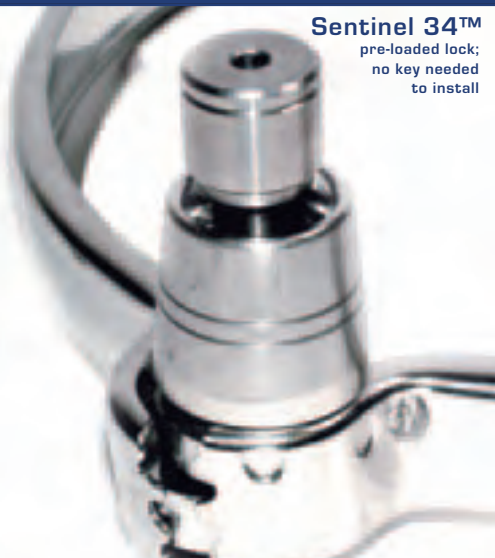
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ISRAEL ELECTRIC'S FIRST REVENUE PROTECTION CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2008

BY ITZICK MICHAELI, REVENUE PROTECTION MANAGER, ISRAEL ELECTRIC CORPORATION

Nearly 10 months have passed, since I stepped into my new position as the company RP manager. I started by driving around the country visiting our RP units and meeting our theft and tamper field and office combatants. Throughout that period, a brand new RP strategy has been constructed, with the assistance of one of our most dedicated RP unit leaders from the Northern District. I was under the impression, that a motivation injection for the RP community was badly needed and I believed that a get together would do the work. The first Israel Electric's (IEC) Revenue Protection Conference was constructed and took place on 28 November 2008, at the IEC main office tower, in the city of Haifa.

Nearly 150 people attended. The crowd included most senior managers from the Customers Division, district and area managers, and other managers and employees from various departments involved in our RP activities.

We had two guest presentations. The first one was delivered by the HOT TV cable company security manager, who described theft cases and issues very similar to our own. The second presentation was delivered by an international speaker.



Last year, I met Mr. Rajat Majumder, the General Manager of the West Bengal Armed Police (IPS-Indian police Service) at the UKRPA, and was deeply impressed by his presentation. The presentation covered the combined efforts of the police

and the utilities that led to a change in the utilities revenues, from many years of heavy losses towards a positive balance. The next day, I took advantage of the opportunity, and escorted Mr. Majumder to a meeting with the Israeli Police Economic Crimes Unit. It is important that our Police command listen carefully and absorb the fact that the police must be obliged and should be more effective when it comes to energy theft issues.

In the conference opening speech, the Customers Division VP Mr. Yigal Ben-Arie, introduced the new RP strategy, and said among other things: "...Our intention is that Illegal consumption will become one of the main tasks in the company ...this is a group task, top priority of the section, together with some other tasks, but in the Top Ten of the activity of the section..."

...We supply electricity, we must receive the money for the product. We must make sure that this will happen. These are the main tasks.

...Illegal consumption has a much bigger, much much bigger significance than guaranteeing the income from our normative customers.

...If we turn something that is unworthy into an accepted thing, let say it has a very high level of malignancy. I am not talking about doing away with illegal use...I am talking about the fact that it is forbidden to turn the stealing of electricity into a normative things in certain classes, certain groups, certain branches...



Itzick Michaeli

Your role as people dealing with illegal consumption is a central role. You are the Gatekeepers of the Israel Electricity Company, you sit on the gates, you make sure that the gates and walls will not be breached, that they will not collapse...but you have to know that this is a sacred job. That if you move aside, we will not have time to wink and we will suddenly find out that stealing of electricity went up dramatically...

Please know that we stand behind you. This entire conference aims at declaring about the domain of illegal electricity which is sometimes taken to be a gray area. Some told me - it is a marginal activity. Have you gone mad? This activity is central, it is important, it is a significant activity, it is an activity which this conference expresses its importance in our eyes..."

Following the presentations, the floor was opened for questions from the crowd, and a selected panel of managers responded.

When the lunch break was over, the RP professionals enjoyed a special and unique performance - a demonstration of "Body Language" performed by an expert theatre lecturer.

I can sum up the conference as a major success. It was quite a headache to construct and organize, but the outcome was great, and everybody will be looking forward to the coming 2008 event.



NEW BERLIN MAN CHARGED WITH GAS FRAUD

By JEFF MEYER, WE ENERGIES • MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Waukesha—A man was charged Wednesday with shaving more than \$24,000 off his utility bills over a 32-year period using a bypass valve on his natural gas meter.

The case represents the third time in 18 months that such criminal charges have been filed against a Waukesha County resident.

An investigation into the gas use by Guenther Huebner of New Berlin was sparked by one of numerous tips that We Energies received in late 2005.

That information came after another New Berlin resident was accused of ducking at least \$36,000 in charges by bypassing his gas meter to heat his in-ground swimming pool and two buildings, according to an investigator for the utility involved in both cases.

*Utility says meter bypass saved
\$24,000 in 32 years*

News gets tip line ringing

News reports about the case of Warren J. Krohn got the company's tip line ringing more than usual, according to investigator Jeff Meyer. Krohn received a nine-month jail term, a \$25,000 fine and a court order to repay the utility for the gas he stole.

"We Energies has had a tip line for quite a number of years, and we regularly get calls," said Meyer, a former police officer who has been an investigator for the utility for nine years. "But the volume of calls increased after the Krohn case, and this was one of them."

The tip concerning Huebner came from a caller reporting that the bypass was installed "when the swimming pool was put in about 20 years ago," according to a criminal complaint.

"At first all we had was the tip, and we had to do a lot of investigation before we had enough information to get a search warrant," Meyer said.

The complaint says that Huebner gave investigators differing accounts of what he knew about the bypass, which was found after a search in September 2006. But he eventually told police in one interview that he recalled "seeing the bypass in the basement about 30 years ago, but forgot about it until the other day," the complaint says.

"I don't know how many illegal underground taps there are out there," Meyer said. "My fear is we're going to discover one of them after something burns down and somebody dies. That's why we kicked this up into high gear after the tips that came because of the Krohn case. We don't want to miss something."

Thefts boost rates

Besides being potential "fatalities waiting to happen," Meyer said, illegal bypasses to avoid charges indirectly penalize other customers.

"These losses are rolled up into the rates for the bills that everyone else has to pay, and that is not fair," Meyer said.

Huebner, 66, has been ordered to make his initial appearance in the case in Waukesha County Circuit Court Nov. 12 on a felony theft charge and a misdemeanor count of fraudulent tapping of a wire, meter or pipe.

The criminal complaint gives the following account:

During an excavation of the gas line on Huebner's property, investigators found the bypass and a second line leading to the basement of his home. The second line avoided the meter while the metered line had a valve attached to it that stopped the flow of gas passing through the meter.

Huebner initially said he did not install the bypass and knew nothing about it until it was pointed out to him by investigators. He was subsequently arrested and taken to the New Berlin police station, where he again denied knowing anything about the bypass.

Huebner acknowledged that he was familiar with gas lines and regulators from previous employment and claimed the bypass "must have been installed along with the original gas line," the complaint says. He subsequently said he recalled noticing it 30 years ago and forgetting about it.

The previous owner of the home told police he didn't install the bypass and reported that after Huebner bought the property the basement was remodeled, an addition was put on the front of the home and a pool was installed.

A man who installed a new furnace in Huebner's home in 2006 told police that when he first looked the job over to provide an estimate he noticed "there were gas pipes going everywhere and it didn't look normal," according to the complaint.

Valve called unusual

The installer also told police that he did not install the shut-off valve, which he noticed by the meter, and that there typically was just one such valve and it usually was installed outside the home by the gas company, not inside.

The installer also said that between his second and third visits to the home, Huebner replaced some gas piping.

In addition to the cases against Krohn and Huebner, prosecutors in Waukesha charged Ricky E. Adair, 45, of Menomonee Falls in May with theft in a case accusing him of avoiding between \$5,258 and \$8,462 in charges by installing a bypass that allowed him to heat his garage for free.

The case against him is pending.



Jeff Meyer

2008 NURPA CONFERENCE TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 24TH – 26TH

The 2008 Northeast Utilities Revenue Protection Association's conference and training seminar will be held at the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls, NY. This year's conference will begin at 8:00 AM on Wednesday, September 24th. This early start will be to accommodate an abbreviated course on the Reid Technique of Interviewing and Interrogation. John C. Reid & Associates, Chicago, Illinois has agreed to offer this to all those who attend this year's conference. This course is normally a 3 day event and requires individuals to travel to a major city to attend. By bringing this to the NURPA conference we are able to offer this certificate course as part of the registration.

Thursday and Friday will have various revenue protection and security presentations on electric, gas and water topics. A full agenda and registration information will be posted on the IURPA web site in the near future and can be found under the NURPA tab. A special room rate of \$92.00 per night will be offered to all attendees. The Queensbury Hotel has been a popular location for this conference for many years. We hope you are able to take advantage of this special offer.

**2008 Northeast Utilities Revenue Protection Association
Conference and Training seminar
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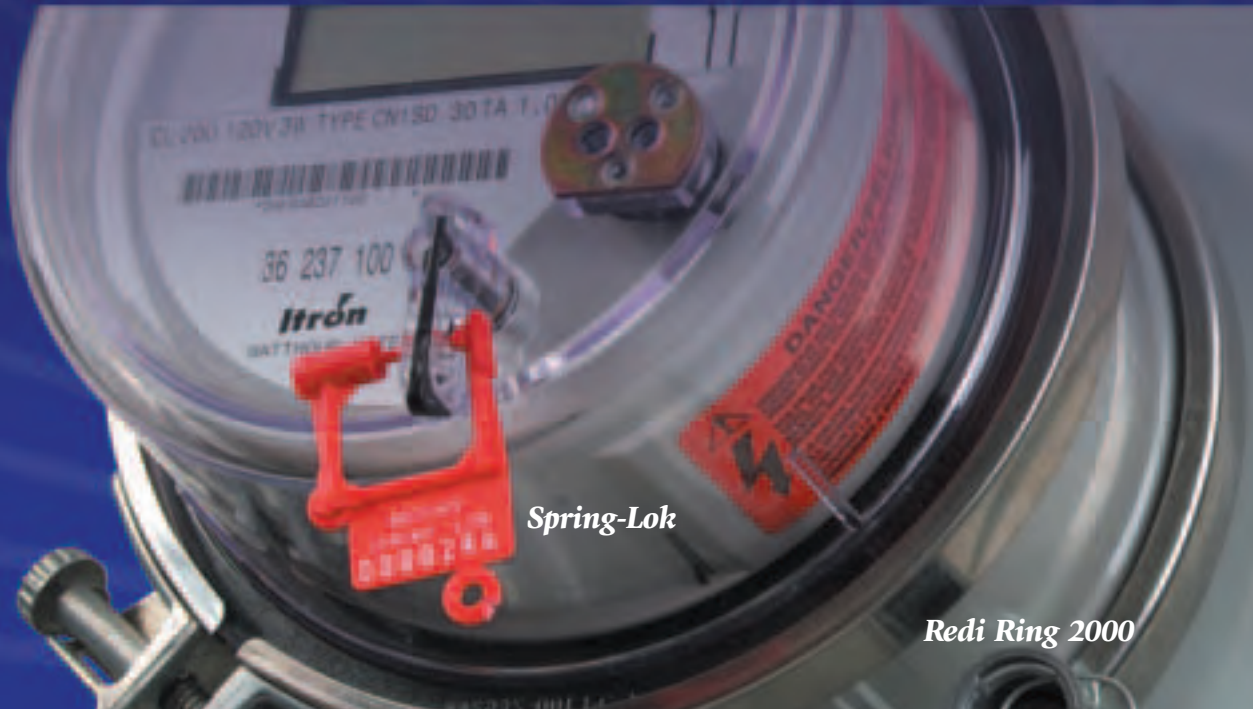
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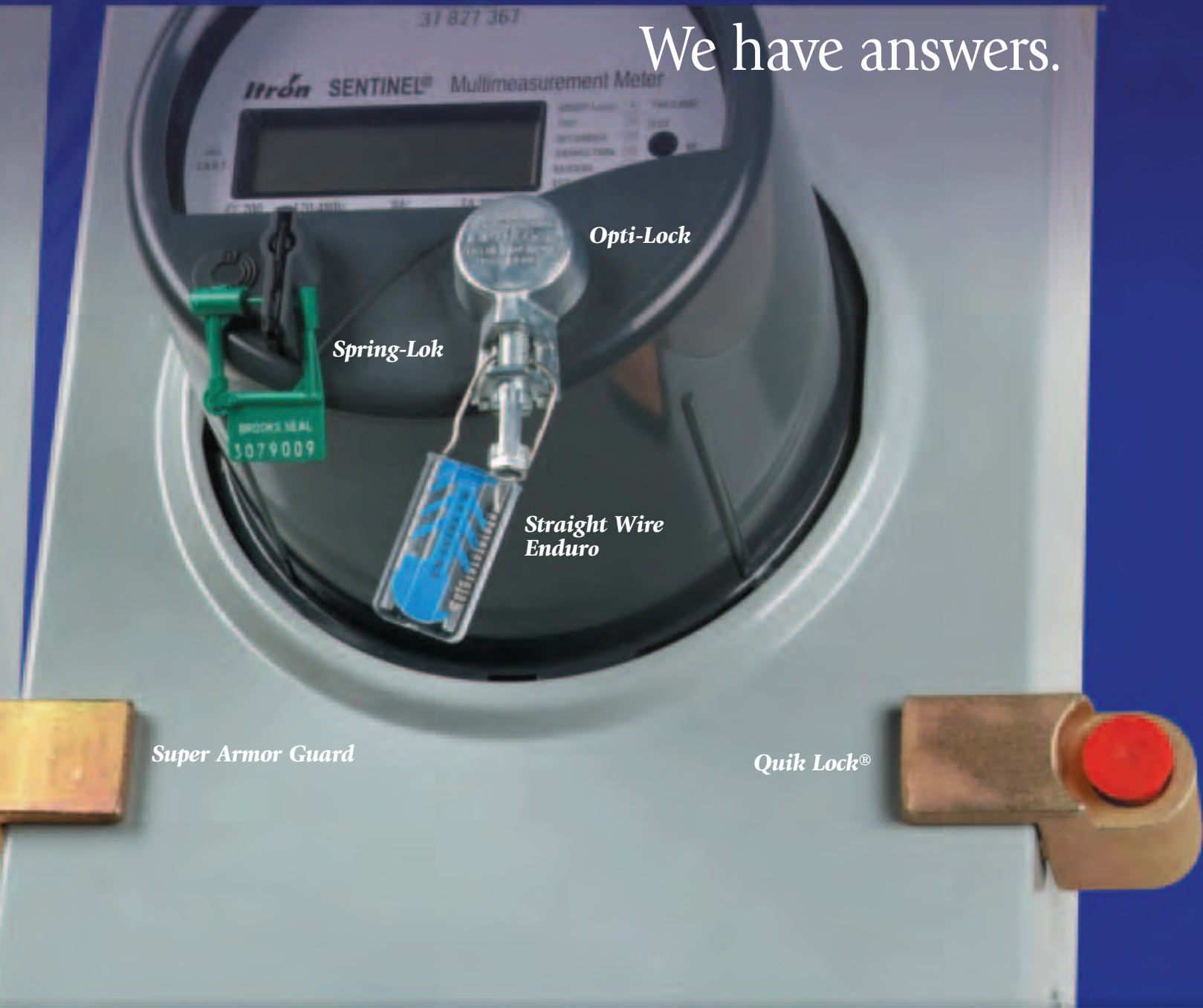
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HOW SAFE IS YOUR UTILITY FROM THEFT OF SERVICE?

BY ROBERT D. ENGLE • PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES, HARRISBURGH, PA

Revenue Protection Professionals continually struggle for an answer to the above question.

I'm certain that all of you have observed the "deer in the headlights" stare when you explain that customers actually steal electric service.

Even law enforcement usually does not realize the magnitude and the impact that theft of service has on utility rates and the safety hazards it presents.

One of Revenue Protection's most arduous tasks is getting the public, legislators, utility commissions and other organizations to understand the severity and consequences of someone installing an illegal tap, jumpering or by-passing a meter, opening secondary switches, tampering with utility meter registration and all of the additional means of stealing a utility's electricity.

I'm certain that all of you have observed the "deer in the headlights" stare when you explain that customers actually steal electric service.

In most cases, the only people that are aware of these serious issues are the professionals that deal with it on a daily basis, us. Some utility companies even use the "head in the sand" approach to energy theft.

Pennsylvania is fortunate to have an organization that attempts to address these issues.

The Revenue Protection Task Force is part of the Energy Association of Pennsylvania (EAPA) and has been in existence since June 25, 2005.

The task force was established in response to the continually evolving complexity of issues which require the attention of the electric and natural gas industries and is comprised of member company representatives and Association staff.

The Mission Statement of EAPA is to improve awareness among Pennsylvania's consumers, local municipal and law enforcement organizations, and Commonwealth legislative and regulatory bodies about personal and public safety hazards, adverse impacts on energy rates and cost burdens placed on good-paying customers, and to promote positive preventive measures focused on mitigating these risks to Pennsylvanians.

One objective is to provide education to the public, law enforcement agencies, legislators and regulators about the facts of energy theft in terms of frequency, adverse financial impacts, safety hazards including public exposures to serious injury or death and destruction of public or personal property and the methods used for energy theft and explaining the potential hazards of each.

Currently the Task Force is comprised of 36 members representing 19 electric and natural gas utilities. EAPA meets 3

to 4 times a year to share information and lessons learned in the on-going battle against energy theft. The open discussions allow us to learn from one another what works and what doesn't.

The Task force has developed a presentation entitled, "How Safe Is Your Utility from Theft of Service?" The 41 page slide show is easily adapted to accommodate any audience the presenter is addressing. Since its inception in early 2007 the slide show has been presented to local legislative groups, police and fire departments and to utility employees. In all instances the audiences were amazed at the degree energy theft exists. In 2008 we're hoping to reach the state and federal levels of law enforcement and judicial organizations.

Currently an initiative is underway to facilitate legislation at the state level to strengthen PA's energy theft law and increase the penalties for theft of service. To date, efforts have resulted in the successful passage of recommended language in the PA House of Representatives.

EAPA also provides energy theft information on the association web page including incident headlines and information on the scope of the problem. There is even a link to the IURPA web site.

As energy rates rise in the US, the temptation to save where possible will certainly impact some customer's decision to steal electric and/or natural gas.

Organizations like the EAPA Revenue Protection Task Force will certainly improve the ability for Revenue Protection professionals to do their jobs successfully in the future.



Bob Engle

A LITTLE TIDBIT FROM OUR SOUTH AFRICAN FRIENDS

Spending fever has reached all walks of South African Life. Here's a fellow who lives in a squatter camp beyond Somerset West in Western Cape who now wants a television set... A new one, mind you, not one of those second hand things in the pawn shop window. So he buys one from the High Street furniture retailer.

But he's back the next day, saying the thing keeps switching off just at a crucial moment in a program. The shop checks it out and can find nothing wrong, but soon enough he's back with the same complaint.

This time the shop sends out a technician to look around and see what the problem is. When the technician gets there, he discovers the fellow's shack draws its electricity from a nearby traffic light..... **and that the TV only works when the light is GREEN!!!**

2008 SURPA / SCRPA REVENUE PROTECTION TRAINING CONFERENCE

The 2008 SURPA/SCRPA conference will be held June 10th - 13th at the Courtyard by Marriott in Cocoa Beach, Florida. Your Planning Committee has arranged some notable speakers and demonstrations for this year's agenda. Presentation topics include Mobile/Automated Meter Reading, Florida Department of Law Enforcement on Marijuana Grows/Methamphetamine, and a Dog Safety demonstration by Bulli Ray just to name a few.

The Courtyard by Marriott is conveniently located 45 minutes from the Orlando Airport and only 200 yards to a sandy beach.

A special room rate will be offered at \$119.00 per night. Reservations can be made directly by calling the Courtyard by Marriott at 321-784-4800. Make certain to mention the SURPA/SCRPA Revenue Protection Conference to receive our special rate!

Information will be posted on the IURPA web site as soon as it becomes available. We look forward to seeing you there.

2008 SURPA / SCRPA Revenue Protection Training Conference

Courtyard by Marriot
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June 10th - 13th

ZIMBABWE - HOW TO STOP THE THIEVES WHO STEAL ENERGY

Zimbabwe is getting serious about punishing energy thieves, said the Harare Herald in an editorial. Each year, unscrupulous poachers steal 290 million kilowatt hours of energy—a hefty chunk given that Zimbabwe only produces 6.4 billion kilowatt hours per year. Finally, Parliament is considering an Electricity Bill that stipulates "long mandatory jail terms" for those who steal copper wire from substations or illegally tap into power lines. Once a few people are jailed, others should be deterred. The key, of course, will be catching the poachers in the act. It is far too easy "for anyone to quietly clip a pair of cables" to a neighbor's power line and siphon off free electricity. But "surely it is possible" for the state utility "to audit unauthorized use." If more energy is flowing through a cable than the meter readings of customers would indicate, then someone is stealing from that cable. "If all else fails, a physical check of residences or businesses lit up in the area one evening should quickly identify" who has pilfered the electricity. Energy thieves often don't think of themselves as criminals. But they are. It's time for them to be "hunted down."



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ALWAYS BE PREPARED!

By MARTY GAINOUS • PEACE RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, ENERGY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

If you think it couldn't or wouldn't happen to you, think again. I work for a medium size electric cooperative located in central Florida that provides electricity in 10 counties with approximately 35,000 members. Relatively small and the act of power theft consisted of a person, disconnected for non payment, cutting the seal and plugging the meter back in or putting jumpers in the socket. The thought of someone bypassing the meter with a tap and using that unmetered electricity to operate several three to five ton air-conditioning units, 100 to 250 watt heat lamps, and irrigation pumps was not there, not in our small towns.

The marijuana grow house that we had all read about and had seen on the major city news stations had made the way to our rural communities and come to find out the local law



enforcement was as naive as we were.

Our first encounter with a grow house came about by chance one day starting with a call from one of our members complaining about partial power to his home. A service crew was dispatched to the location. When the crew pulled up to the house they noticed a freshly dug area in line of where the underground ran. The member said he had been doing some irrigation work there not to worry about it. What had actually happened was that the member had dug up his tap to check it for a short. When he couldn't find anything



wrong he called us. The crew, using common sense, dug the area any way and found a splitter with cable running underground to the side of the house. The crew called in and a manager went out to the location and the sheriffs department was called. The sheriffs department sent out a young deputy probably fresh out of school that didn't seem to take what was happening too seriously. The shed in the back yard with blacked out windows and a five-ton central a/c unit hooked to it didn't even get a rise out of him. He wrote up a report and was gone. That night one of our employees, that happened to live next to this thief, watched him back a trailer up to the shed and haul off it's contents.



Marty Gainous

Needless to say the incident opened our eyes to the possibility of more of these homes out there. Meetings were set up with narcotic officers in the counties we serve and after research on our part and theirs ended up busting four grow house operations within the month.

My advice is, be prepared. If you haven't encountered these thieves yet, you most likely will soon. Call the law enforcement agencies that serve the counties you serve, ask for a representative of the narcotics division and set up a meeting with a detective. Most likely they suspect someone of operating a grow and could use your help. Utility theft will definitely get them a search warrant signed helping them bust the grow operation and you busting a thief, robbing your utility of thousands of dollars in revenue.



HIDDEN COSTS AND SECURITY CONCERNS WITH AMR/AMI CHANGEOUTS

By JIM PELANT • DISTRICT SALES MANAGER, BROOKS UTILITY PRODUCTS GROUP

In today's constant changing utility market, whether it be electric, gas or water, it seems that AMR/AMI (Auto-matic Meter Reading/Advanced Metering Infrastructure) are the hot topics in each and every industry conversation regarding future planning.

Although automation continues to be the way of the future, there seems to be many unanswered questions regarding implementation and rollout of the proposed systems. In my 15 years experience in dealing with utilities in the Midwest and surrounding areas, it appears that the same burning issues constantly arise. Some of the overall concerns with AMR/AMI solutions

“Although automation continues to be the way of the future, there seems to be many unanswered questions regarding implementation and rollout of the proposed systems”.

and the hidden costs surrounding them are discussed below.

***Detecting diversion and theft after installation** – Once the utilities have begun implementation of their new AMR/AMI system, detection of tampering in the future is a constant and viable concern. Without visits from utility personal on a monthly basis, many feel that their systems are vulnerable to possibly repeated attacks due to the lack of inspections of the companies meter points or “cash registers”, if you will. Power outages seem to be one of the biggest and most widely talked about issues in this category. Although many, if not all, of the systems available today, will detect in one way or another a meters removal or tampering while energized. The question remains, what is the solution to the problem when power to the unit has been disrupted? This brings us to another one of constant battles between utility departments.

***Level of protection for future security** – Regardless of how large or small your utility company may be, one question that will be fought to the bitter end is how much security, or lack of, is actually enough. When deploying an AMR/AMI system an ideal opportunity presents itself. Take time, step back and realistically look at how effective your current security program is working. On rare occasions you will find it to be sufficient. More often then not, some revamping is probably in order. AMR/AMI deployment rep-

resents an ideal opportunity to inspect the entire utility system for any security breaches, wiring application errors or deterioration of equipment and basically start clean. Take advantage of this occasion and review both the sealing and locking requirements your company currently has in place. Decide at this point the real cost of changing or upgrading security seals, locking hardware, padlocks, keys etc. Due to the fact that you will not have your monthly “watchdogs” in the field many utilities have taken the stand that now is the time to increase security levels throughout the entire system and evaluate the durability of their current devices. Perhaps at this time, the practice of updating sockets and incorporating higher levels of security items such as hardened locking rings, side locks, cable seals, heavier gauge seals etc, would be readily accepted.

***Aged equipment on the system** –Over the last half century or so, there have been many metering developments, changes and improvements. Unfortunately, quite a bit of this equipment is still on many of the systems in the industry. Although a lot of the older devices in the field are still operable and seem in good working order, this is yet another area of distress across the industry. Many of the meters previously manufactured and still on utility systems today are either obsolete, difficult to locate or just not cost justifiable to consider replacement. Manufacturers over this time have developed answers to many of these situations in the fashion of updated meter sockets, test equipment and adapters for different meter configurations such as A base, B base and meter form transformations. These are products that seem to easily be overlooked on the onset of an AMR/AMI project evaluation and should be looked at quite closely and considered when pursuing a new automated deployment.

I know for too many of you, this information is far from new and has already been discussed, evaluated and possibly implemented at your respected utilities. It is my opinion however, and that of many utility personnel I visit with throughout the industry that it never hurts to sometimes revisit the obvious before it is too late. With the ever growing presence of AMR/AMI systems in our industry, it is our responsibility as IURPA members to educate those in our valued companies about the importance of an accurate, safe and secure metering system. Good luck in your efforts, have a safe and healthy 2008.



Jim Pelant

THE OL' WATERING HOLE

By JEFF HARRIS • MISSOURI GAS ENERGY

A Revival in the Midwest?

O.K., so maybe I'm overstating this a little bit. I mean, it wasn't exactly the old-fashioned, traditional sermons and Hymns echoing from an oversized canvas tent in the heart of the Bible Belt, but I do believe that the recent NACM/META joint conference qualifies as a revival.

It's no secret that META went through a difficult time in recent history. Unexpected departures of Board members and an unexplained lack of support for a proposed conference left most of us scratching our heads as to what was going on. We knew that there was no lack of outstanding R/P professionals in the Midwest, and, through the persistent leadership of Kurt Roussell, we re-committed ourselves to the group and moving forward.

Fast-forward to a Roundtable discussion at the Illinois Revenue Protection Conference where the question was raised, "Why doesn't META partner with the regional NACM (National Association of Credit Managers) group?" The more we talked about it – Credit and Collections teaming up with Revenue Protection – the more it made sense. The rest, as they say, is history.

I believe that if you talked to anyone who came down to the Ozarks, they'd agree that it was a good decision, and that we owe a BIG thanks to the members of the NACM Gateway Region Utilities Group for all of their hospitality, friendship, and willingness to partner with us on the conference. We also owe a huge thanks to all of the Vendors who, as usual, stepped up without hesitation to support our efforts. With 2008 being META's turn to partner with IURPA for their annual conference, it couldn't have happened at a better time.



Jeff Harris

I know one thing for sure. Sitting around that table on Friday morning with all of the outstanding individuals who were able to stay for the META membership meeting has renewed my faith in the group and its future.

If you have a story, article, or opinion that you would like to share, please e-mail it to me at jeff.harris@sug.com. Until next time, stay safe.

Is Your Utility Protecting its Revenue Stream Adequately?

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WHY WSUTA IS BRANCHING INTO WATER

BY DAVID F. AKIN, ESQ., COMPLIANCE AND METERING MANAGER • CITY OF SAN DIEGO, WATER DEPARTMENT, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Anyone that has been in Revenue Protection/Code Enforcement knows the big and easy money is in theft of electricity. Residential and commercial water theft is still an open book as far as the extent of the problem. Estimating water losses, particularly on construction sites can be difficult. Few water or combined utilities seal and/or lock in place water meters. This is an open invitation to tamper with or remove the meter to get unmetered service. A piece of PVC or hose (often referred to as a stiff or jumper) is commonly used after the meter is illegally removed. Depending on the meter, putting the meter back in backwards or tampering with its workings or register

Recovering lost revenue and expenses is important, but public safety is the primary consideration. Water theft carries with it the danger of cross contamination.

can be methods of theft.

As with electricity and gas, water customers will steal for a variety of reasons. Saving money is the most common reason. For that reason, the City of San Diego has focused its efforts on construction where large amounts of water for grading, dust control and other water using phases of construction are involved. Fire hydrants with the capacity to produce large volumes of water are common targets. Drive through any large or small construction sites and dripping uncapped hydrants are common. The City of San Diego, like most water utilities has a fire hydrant program. This offers a legal way to obtain water from hydrants, but even then contractors will connect to the closest water source metered or not. A few years ago one such case involving a dual high rise settled for \$300,000.

For municipal utilities, like the City of San Diego, significant revenues can be collected in the form of Administrative Citations (up to \$1000), Notices of Violation with Civil Penalties (up to \$2500 per day per violation), and civil or criminal prosecution. Penalties recovered can greatly exceed the restitution amounts that are often challenging to prove at trial. In San Diego, penalties and other settlement dollars, other than restitution for the water itself are deposited in the Code Enforcement Fund to be used only for reinvesting in the Water Code Enforcement (Revenue Protection) effort. Lap top computers with wireless access to information systems and training (WSUTA and other

conferences), are examples of Code Enforcement Fund uses

Recovering lost revenue and expenses is important, but public safety is the primary consideration. Water theft carries with it the danger of cross contamination. Large water users and those where the risk of cross connection of the customer's water system with the City of San Diego's potable water system are required to install, maintain and test backflow prevention devices. In the State of California and other states, water purveyors are required to ensure that backflows are tested every year. Failure to do so subjects the utility to significant fines from the State. This is a big concern for San Diego, so the Water Department's Code Enforcement Unit and Cross Connection Unit work closely together to enforce the City and State Codes related to backflow protection.

As part of its water conservation program, San Diego produces and sells recycled water, used for irrigation, to customers and must be used in ways that prevents that comply with City and State Codes and policies. When a customer violates State Codes , the City of San Diego that receives a violation from the State of California. The County of San Diego is the State's enforcement agency. The Code Enforcement Unit has been involved in recycled water process as well.

As water becomes more in more in short supply, water conservations and waste Codes will be common in the Western States, such as California, Nevada and Arizona. The City of San Diego's Water Code Enforcement has already begun work in areas such as customer leaks and over irrigation which creates liability risk on City property.

A final area of concern to Water utilities is the threat of terrorist attacks on water supplies and delivery systems. In San Diego, security measures are in place to protect water and sewer treatment facilities, dams, reservoirs and other sensitive facilities. One can easily imagine the damage from flooding caused by destruction of a dam or loss of life and property from major wild fires should water sources be interrupted.

For all of these reasons, WSUTA has been actively reaching out to water utilities.

Prior to joining the City of San Diego in February 2001, David worked in Revenue Protection with both Houston Lighting & Power and Southern California Edison. He also worked as an attorney for several years in Southern California.



DAVID AKIN

2008 WSUTA CONFERENCE TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 10 & 11

The 2008 Western States Utility Theft Association Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco, CA on September 10th & 11th. There will be an opportunity for registration check in during the evening of September 9th. The agenda and room information is still being formulated and will be communicated on the IURPA web site as soon as it becomes available.

**Western States Utility Theft
Association
2008 Conference
Holiday Inn
Fisherman's Wharf
San Francisco, CA
September 10th & 11th.**



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IURPA • 18 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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