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IURPA – META – Joint Conference Chicago, Illinois



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From the Chairperson

This will be my final thoughts to all of you while still Chairperson of the IURPA Board.

First, let me thank you for all the continued support of both the regional revenue protection associations as well as all IURPA members who work together to address the issues of revenue losses and safety.

Second, I want to make sure that I acknowledge all the great people on the board of IURPA as well as our international liaisons (both past and present) who continuously give their time and experience to the association in presenting at the meetings or writing articles for the magazine. George Balsamo, Woody Woodward, Kurt Roussell, Cleve Freeman, Gary Signorelli, Greg Lee and Jeff Cornelius have all been actively involved for 15 or more years. More recently, newer members to the IURPA Board Eddie Fee, John Kratzinger, Steve Sprague, and Patricia Uhlman have all been vital in providing support as well. I would also like to acknowledge our newest board member Paul Unruh who I am sure will be a wealth of new information and ideas.

Great presentations by international liaisons



Wayne Wohler
IURPA Chairperson

The ongoing changes within the utility industry will not diminish the responsibility of revenue protection, but will require more and more innovative ways to identify and recover loss.

Iszick Michaeli (Who brings me candy) from Israel, Michael Rhode from South Africa, (as well as members from Brazil, Canada, India, France and the United Kingdom) have showed us over the years how the theft of utilities can be as diverse (or in some cases more so) as we have in the United States but so often quite similar. This is what the exchange of information is all about at our conferences.

The ongoing changes within the utility industry will not diminish the responsibility of revenue protection, but will require more and more innovative ways to identify and recover loss. It appears management within the utilities is realizing more and more that dollars spent to stop theft, or tampering of services, can not only reduce/recover loss and prevent safety issues, but also help reduce the all too often resulting lawsuits if nothing takes place to stop the theft..

Congratulations to Midwest Energy Theft Association (META) for putting on an excellent program this past June 2015 (after some frustration in past years). May this be the first of many as more regional revenue protection programs are revitalized.

Congratulations to incoming IURPA Chairperson John Kratzinger. May the joint NURPA / IURPA conference in 2016 be a very successful program.

In closing, it is essential that all members, from all sections (nationally and internationally) remember that we form a community working daily to find and share solutions for the utility industry.

Remember to:

- Keep sending in articles for the IURPA magazine.
- Attend and participate in regional and joint conferences.
- Continue to work smart, safe, and productively.

ON THE INSIDE

MOVING THE METER IN THE WRONG DIRECTION USING A "BLACK BOX"	5
2016 NURPA & IURPA SAVE THE DATE	7
IF YOU WANT TO REDUCE SUBSTATION COPPER THEFTS	8
POLITICAL CORRECTNESS BEFORE THE TRUTH	10
SCRPA/SURPA REVENUE PROTECTION TRAINING SEMINAR	12
I DID IT MY WAY	13

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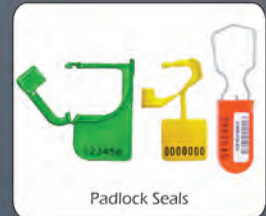


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MOVING THE METER IN THE WRONG DIRECTION USING A “BLACK BOX”

By Itzick Michaeli, Israel Electric Revenue Protection Manager

It was a well known fact, that Black Boxes have been used for many years by customers, for downsizing their electricity bills.

We never managed to put our hands on one of those devices, until last month.

Israel Electric Corporation (IEC) RP investigator at the City of Ashkelon service office, accompanied with police detectives and members of IEC Security Unit, arrested two customers, suspected of stealing electricity by means of a sophisticated and improvised Black Box device.

The arrest was executed after several weeks of surveillance and undercover operations. The suspected customers dangerously tampered with the IEC fuse box for operating the illegal home made device,



Itzick Michaeli
Israel Electric
Revenue Protection
Manager

causing the electricity meter to move in the opposite direction - and decrease the registration of the electricity consumption meter. The two, residents of the city of Kiryat Gat in their 40s, were questioned at the police station in the city.

During the undercover operation, evidence against the two main suspects was gathered. The suspicion stands for attaching the Black Box to an electrical outlet after interfering with IEC equipment at the fuse box outside the apartments.

In other words, the suspects managed to decrease the electricity meter registration of power consumed, and significantly lower the bi-monthly bill, for unlimited usage of their air conditioners during the Israeli hot Summer.



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September 21, 2016

- ❖ Chairman Cheryl A. LaFleur was first nominated by President Barack Obama to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in 2010 and was confirmed for a second term by the Senate in 2014. She was named Acting Chairman on November 25, 2013 and Chairman on July 30, 2014.
- ❖ Chairman LaFleur is honored to lead the Commission at a time when the nation is making substantial changes in its energy supply and infrastructure to meet environmental challenges and improve reliability and security. Since she joined the Commission, her priorities have included reliability and grid security, promoting regional transmission planning, and supporting a clean and diverse power supply. She serves as the FERC liaison to the Department of Energy's Electricity Advisory Committee. She is a member of the NARUC Committees on Electricity and Critical Infrastructure and was co-chair of the FERC/NARUC Forum on Reliability and the Environment. She is a frequent speaker on energy issues.
- ❖ Prior to joining the Commission in 2010, Chairman LaFleur had more than 20 years' experience as a leader in the electric and natural gas industry. She served as executive vice president and acting CEO of National Grid USA, responsible for the delivery of electricity to 3.4 million customers in the Northeast. Her previous positions at National Grid USA and its predecessor New England Electric System included chief operating officer, president of the New England distribution companies and general counsel. She led major efforts to improve reliability and employee safety. Earlier in her career, she was responsible for leading award-winning conservation and demand response programs for customers.
- ❖ Chairman LaFleur has been a nonprofit board member and leader, including as a trustee of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, United Way of Central Massachusetts, and several other organizations. She is also active in several women's energy organizations.
- ❖ She received a Bipartisan Congressional Award in 2013 for her work on grid reliability. In 2014, the Northeast Energy and Commerce Association presented her with its Vanguard Award for her long-time leadership in the development of competitive power markets. , Chairman LaFleur has also been honored by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and the YWCA of Central Massachusetts, among others.
- ❖ Chairman LaFleur began her career as a lawyer at Ropes and Gray in Boston. She has a J.D. from Harvard Law School, where she was an editor of the Harvard Law Review, and an A.B. from Princeton University. A native of Massachusetts, she is married to William A. Kuncik, a retired attorney, and they are the parents of two grown children. www.ferc.gov/about/com-mem/lafleur/lafleur-bio.asp

IF YOU WANT TO REDUCE SUBSTATION COPPER THEFTS YOU HAVE TO WORK AT IT

By David Bowler, Security Specialist
Emera Maine

After 27 years with the Maine State Police I decided it was time for a second career. In July of 2012 I was hired by Emera Maine, formerly Bangor Hydro, to become their Security Specialist. This position was created because of all the copper thefts that were occurring and most of these thefts were from our substations. We have significantly reduced copper theft, and here are some of the things I have done that have helped to bring our copper theft numbers down.



David Bowler
Security Specialist
Emera Maine

In the beginning, the company tried to manage these thefts the best they could but simply did not have the resources to manage the ongoing thefts. Investigating a copper theft is time consuming and can be very frustrating, especially when you are at a substation starting an investigation and you receive a call that another substation has been broken into in an adjacent town. It takes a lot of hard work and planning to prevent copper thefts and investigating a copper theft requires assistance. I found early on that you can't do this yourself, it just isn't possible. If I were to offer advice to others, I would say: build a team. Reach out to the people who will be involved in prosecution of the cases – in our case that included law enforcement, and District Attorneys. Offer training to everyone involved. Develop clear procedures and training for employees who will be your eyes and ears in the field. Secure your substations. Reach out to the recycling centers that purchase scrap metal. And work with the media to share results. If you have a coordinated team and demonstrate you are tough on theft, you will be successful.

The first thing I did was reach out to the many law enforcement agencies in Emera Maine's service territory. I met with the highest ranking officer of every law

enforcement agency that has one of our substations in their jurisdiction. I already knew and had worked with a vast majority of the officers I now come in contact with. I didn't have to build new relationships from the ground up and that was such an advantage. During my meetings with the various departments I simply let them know what my new position entails and asked what resources I could count on if I needed assistance.

Meeting with the District Attorneys that would be responsible for prosecuting my cases was also important. We discussed copper theft cases and what they would need from me in order for them to give the investigating officer a complaint. Again I was fortunate because I already knew the District Attorneys. None of them had any complicated needs and they simply viewed my theft cases like they would any theft case. The basic premise was dot your I's and cross your T's.

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The next thing I did was train, train, train! I have provided Substation Security and Investigation Training to over 250 law enforcement officers so far and I have many more departments in the queue. The reason for this training is twofold. First it provides them training on what types of crimes occur at these substations and how to remain safe during their investigations. Second, I get to be in a room with fifty or more law enforcement officers, which allows me to be seen and hopefully remembered by the officers that are not familiar with me. At the end of each training session I hand out a spreadsheet that contains all of our substation addresses. I encourage these officers to go to the substations in their patrol area and familiarize themselves with each one. I let them know that it is ok to park at the substation entrance while they are working and be visible as traffic goes by. I ask them to put their spot lights on any substation they drive by and look at the interior checking for anything unusual. It's the little things like this that can be an effective deterrent.

I also created simple, easy to understand procedures for Emera Maine field employees – line crews, power system technicians and meter technicians -- and provided associated training. These are the men and women that I depend on to be my eyes and ears in the field. None of them have any law enforcement background and I take this into consideration when I train them. I let them know that I'm not here to turn them into investigators but their knowing a little about basic investigation procedures can sometimes make or break a case. I also let them know they can call me at any time, day or night. You need to be available when they call you so you can provide them with any needed assistance.

The next thing on the list is securing your substations to the best of your ability. I am in the midst of completing Physical Security Assessments on our substations. These assessments look for potential vulnerabilities and what is needed to address them. I am fortunate to work for a great company like Emera Maine. They take security and the protection of their assets seriously. If I need upgrades on the security equipment at our facilities I can generally

procure whatever I need as long I can show a case for why we need it and how it will benefit the company.

It is also important to visit the Recycling Centers in your territory so they know who you are and what it is you do for your company. Always go to these scrapyards when you have had a copper theft. Give them pictures of the various types of wire that was stolen and give them your business card so they can make contact with you if needed. They may not be able to help but they now know you are out there. When I have had a copper theft, and the scrapyard is too far away, I do not hesitate to request the assistance of the investigating officer.

Last but not least, make sure successful prosecutions make a "splash" in the media, especially the big ones. Any convictions that come out of District Courts make the local newspapers and this is a good thing. It is the felony convictions that need the media's attention the most. When you get a felony conviction, first celebrate a little because they are a lot of work. Then work with your Communications Department to ensure these convictions make it to the newspapers and the nightly news. The word will get out and I believe media coverage is one of the cheapest most effective deterrents we have as investigators.

As of this writing we have not had a substation burglary since December of 2013. And yes my knuckles are sore from knocking on wood! I was fortunate when I took this job because it was new to the company and I could create procedures that I thought would be the most effective in deterring copper thefts, apprehending the individuals responsible and successfully prosecuting each case. I wrote this article in hopes that my counterparts might take away just one thing that will hopefully assist them in preventing or solving their next copper theft.

This particular aspect of the job is not easy and it is time consuming but when that hard work pays off it is very gratifying. So remember, if you want to reduce substation copper thefts you have to build a team and work at it together.

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS BEFORE THE TRUTH PERCEPTION BEFORE INVESTIGATION

By Gary Signorelli, IURPA Director

In Corporate America, I know we all struggle with these kind of differences every day of our lives. This article is meant to show that political correctness doesn't get to the truth and that perception sometimes trumps our investigations.



Gary Signorelli
IURPA Director

Looking into the eyes of a suspect and interviewing the person usually leads to great discovery and admission of guilt. Most likely, we'll find the customer of record is the culprit doing the tampering. Other times, someone else closely associated with the beneficiary is the suspect. But it doesn't matter who did it, according to the State of Florida (and I'm sure most states), the customer of record is the person responsible for paying back the utility for its losses. That being said, in a court of law, the burden of proof is placed upon the company personnel investigating the case.

Today, a case I'm in the middle of has taken a rare and different route. I would like to present a scenario that makes me tenuous on a decision.

A month ago, a man (who had been under surveillance since 2010 at a previous address), was found to be in possession of a stolen meter at his current residence. The stolen meter is thought to have been used at the previous location where we never found it. Several Investigators tried during the week and on weekends, to no avail. Even though tamper flags were a regular monthly occurrence, we couldn't get the timing down. The meter location was in the backyard, so we all encountered difficulty getting in without being seen.

Then he moved to a different location and the tamper flag indicators ended at the previous location. The new residence was a smaller home than the first and the meter location again behind a fence. Tamper flags began showing on a report immediately after moving

into the current residence, but was not turned over for investigation until a six month period had elapsed. While monitoring the current address, I checked the customer for other addresses. I noticed his previous address and vividly remembered visiting the home checking for a diversion of some kind.

After many surveillance trips to the current home (weekdays, nights, weekends), I decided to try catching it on a Sunday. One issue became noticeable from surveillance: that he only installed the stolen meter either late Saturday or early Sunday morning. He wasn't consistent, sometimes not installing the meter at all on a weekend or two. It then became a guessing game, just like at his previous address.

So, on this particular Sunday, much to our surprise, the customer wasn't home. Using our handheld meter reading device, I was

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unable to capture a reading on the assigned meter. I did, however, discover the stolen meter in use. The meter numbers did not match the number I was looking for. The stolen meter had almost 13,000 more kilowatt hours (kwhs) on it since stolen in 2009 (in my mind justifying the fact this meter was used at his previous location). The meter was recovered for evidence after photos were taken with deputies present. A new meter was installed both as a courtesy and according to our department policy on weekend investigations. The Sheriff's Department asked why I was leaving the man's service on? I chose to call it POLITICAL CORRECTNESS.

Here's where the situation becomes tricky. The customer called in Monday morning and spoke with me. He admitted that he had the meter of record, but couldn't arrange for a date and time that I could pick it up and interview him. He was speaking English well enough on the phone until I began asking some questions. He wanted a Spanish speaking representative, so I arranged for one. When we tried to get the TRUTH, the customer clammed up and asked us to contact his lawyer.

I spoke to our corporate attorney and advised of the situation. Our corporate attorney knows the Public Service Commission (PSC) Rules and Regulations very well, so after speaking with the attorney for the customer (without asking the questions required to get the facts), he has suggested that I look at the consumption post tampering, just at the current address and formulate a rebill based on that. Forget the first address where the stolen meter was most likely used because we couldn't prove it.

Our company's PERCEPTION is that we don't want the PSC to rule against the company. I get that, but there's been no mention of a PSC complaint. After some discussion, we could figure a way to recover monies without risking PSC involvement. Needless to say, I've pushed back some. Not because I want to be a rebel, but more importantly, I want to be able to do the job as IURPA has trained me. I

feel compelled to be an advocate for our honest rate paying customers. Anytime an informant contacts the Revenue Assurance Department to provide a tip or lead, it's because they want us to do the right thing. Stopping the tampering and recovering the revenue is very important to our company and customers financially. In addition, it removes the eminent danger of someone getting hurt or killed. Oh, by the way, doesn't the PSC have a responsibility to protect the rights of all customers?

This INVESTIGATION is not over. In my mind, the customer needs to answer up without using his lack of comfort with the English language or by using his lawyer as protection. If we don't get the answers, I would suggest he is responsible for all the kwhs recorded on the illegal meter found in his possession. I would hope the PSC would support that. In the past, after finding a stolen meter in use, the customer (without legal representation) became responsible for the total amount of kwhs. Why is it so difficult now that he's hired counsel? I guess the customer's attorney won't provide the answers we need to complete the investigation because he has to protect his client. That's what he gets paid for.

I'll end up doing what the company thinks is best. Everyone should do that. I'm not one to rock the boat, but I sure wonder if we can push the envelope just a little more and recover the maximum amount of money in kwhs. I would also like to dangle the proverbial carrot in front of the customer's attorney: have his client pay for all the kwhs shown on the stolen meter and we could reduce the final costs associated with the substantial investigation time. I believe it's possible if done tactfully enough. This may not work out the way I'd like, but we all have to try and put some thought into the process before making a final decision. That's what Investigators do.

My final thought is that we should always do the right thing. Being politically correct is not always the truth and sometimes perception trumps the investigation.

This year the South Central Revenue Protection Association (SCRPA) and the Southeastern Utility Revenue Protection Association (SURPA) met in Atlanta for their combined annual conference. The first day of the conference provided informative presentations including, Energy Marketing, Watch Your Step, Sovereign Citizen, The Remarkable Power of Positive Reinforcement, What Makes a Good Leader – Lessons Learned, and Energy Collections – With a Little Help from Our Friends.

For the second day of the conference, this year’s hosts worked to produce a certification program to bring a standard practice to utilities across the southeastern corner of the United States. The training covered a wide array of topics including, Investigation techniques, Interviewing skills, Dealing with Difficult People, and The Power of Partnerships.

According to the SCRPA Board, “The purpose of this training is to bring a common skill-set to the members of our organization, utilize best practices for safe and efficient investigations, bring a monetary recovery to the victim utility, and encourage cooperation between law-enforcement, courts, and utility companies.”

The attendees received certification as Utility Theft Investigator 1 at the completion of the week’s activities.

Soon, a Challenge Coin recognizing their Certification will be distributed to those who attended the course.

Additionally, the course materials are available for the members to use in their own training initiatives.



The third and last day of the conference included a roundtable discussion and presentation of Theft Reporting Methods.

We are excited to be meeting in conjunction with IURPA in 2017, and the board has begun preparation for the 2017 conference.

Thank you to all the attendees and speakers for making the 2015 SCRPA/SURPA Revenue Protection Training Seminar a success!

I Did It My Way

By Itzick Michaeli, Israel Electric Revenue Protection Manager

It took me and my Israel Electric colleagues, nearly 15 years to develop the Revenue Protection mission, from a side duty of a very busy electricity bills collections office, into a full time working Revenue Protection unit. RP units are stationed in each of the 3 urban Districts Tel-Aviv, Haifa & Jerusalem, and in each of the 20 regional service offices that belong to the Northern & Southern Districts. All that started in 1996, when I became the Manager of the Afula Service region office, at the Northern part of Israel, serving nearly 70,000 customers (today 130,000), around Nazareth and 5 more cities, towns and nearly 100 villages.



Itzick Michaeli
Israel Electric
Revenue Protection
Manager

Many of those customers were needy, many others were politically driven against paying taxes, counting the Israel Electric Corporation as one more vicious arm of the government. At this atmosphere I learned my first lessons regarding electricity theft and the necessity of having a Revenue Protection strategy.

During my 11 years as service region manager, I experienced numerous methods and cases of electricity theft, and lead a pilot program, that convinced IEC management, to establish professional RP units in every service office.

On February 2007, I became IEC Revenue Protection Manager. Since then, it was one hell of a ride, to professionally lead the 60 devoted revenue protection investigators, in the field and in the office, struggling endlessly to supply them with better knowledge, advanced tools and mainly, unconditioned management support.

My love affair with IURPA, started on September 2001, when I walked into the Silver Legacy Resort in Reno Nevada, looking for Woody Woodward. I contacted Woody weeks before, and registered for the WSUTA conference. During the event, I was overwhelmed with the presentations, unbelievable stories and the dedicated experts, that happily shared their knowledge with me. That was the first time I learned that people steal gas too, and that electricity theft and cannabis grow houses "Go together like a horse and carriage".

I joined IURPA, and invited myself in 2002 for a visit with ComEd, and made friends with Tim Hopper and his RP group. The 2003 joint IURPA/META conference in Oakbrook IL was the first time I presented Israel Electric RP operations, and the rest is history.

At this stage, I truly feel that my mission is accomplished.

On May 2nd 2015, I celebrated 30 years of working for Israel Electric Corporation. A very necessary company reform is approaching, and employees aging 59 – 62 were offered a nice and comforting early retirement package.

Judith, my wife retired lately after working 42 years at the University of Haifa, and I decided to join her, starting September 1st.

The last 12 years out of the 30 I worked for Israel Electric, were dedicated to combatting electricity theft and protecting the company's revenues. During those years I traveled to numerous conferences and in 4 of the Continents, seeking for knowledge and experience regarding Revenue Protection.

(Continued on next page)

I happily accepted invitations to visit the RP units in various utilities, and always joined the investigators for a day in the field. The IURPA Board meetings and the conferences following, created an important source for knowledge and experiences, I brought to Israel Electric management and my RP colleagues.

Whatever I did regarding the protection of Israel Electric revenues, and battling electricity theft, was never done before in the company on this scale.

I don't know yet who will replace me in this wonderful but demanding position, and I do hope that he, or she, will follow my steps and will get quickly involved with IURPA. I will always be there for assistance whenever needed.

I intend to keep my IURPA membership, and might drop by whenever a conference anywhere in the US will suit our travelling plans.

Thank you all, for sharing knowledge and unlimited friendship with me throughout the last 14 years.

Shalom Ve Le-hit-ra-ot
(Goodbye & see you soon - Hebrew)

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IURPA • 25 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 twenty-four 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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