Volume 30 Issue 1 Spring 2020



Leadership throughout our 30 years



Ed Holmes 1990-91



Claude LaBaw 1991-92



Frank Downey 1992-93



Ron Turner 1993-94



Andrew Green 1994-95



Ruth Durkey 1995-96



Richard Umlauf 1997



John Vitali 1998



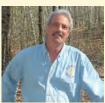
1999



Alan Chapman Michael Szilvagyi Cleve Freeman 2000



2001-02



George Balsamo 2002-03



Kurt Roussell 2004-05



Greg Lee 2005-06



Jeff Cornelius 2006-07



Gary Signorelli 2010-11



Pat Uhlman 2012-13



Wayne Wohler 2014-15



John Kratzinger 2016-17



Steve Sprague 2018-19



Paul Unruh 2020

GET DELINQUENT ELECTRIC, GAS & WATER ACCOUNTS BACK ON TRACK WITH

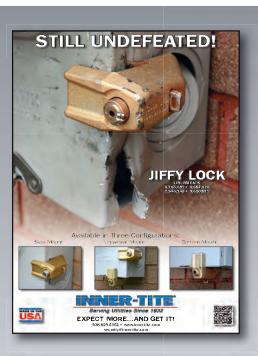






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IURPA

From the Chairperson By Paul Unruh Changing Times for IURPA

Remember, not too many years ago, when you went to a revenue protection conference or workshop and you would see the many of the same people in attendance? While there might be a few new faces in the crowd, it was a time to renew the working relationships that being a member of IURPA, and the regional groups made happen.

Today, it seems this may be changing. There are more new faces in attendance and very few of the regular attendees at conferences. Some of that is likely due to retirements. But most of the changing trend seems to be that people rotate in and out of revenue protection jobs every two or three years now that employees are 'in charge of their own careers'.

The days of finding a job or department you like and spending the bulk of your career in that group (like revenue protection) are apparently over. Some leaders discourage spending a large block of years in one area of the utility. They don't accept that an employee who likes and is good at what they do should be viewed as an asset to the utility. With less and less experience in the revenue protection departments, the revenues generated by the team begin to decline. When revenues decline,

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Paul Unruh IURPA Chairperson

There are more new faces in attendance and very few of the regular attendees at conferences.

revenue protection gets downsized (or eliminated altogether). The common reasoning is that

the utility gets its money anyway, as the losses from theft and unaccounted for energy are passed along to those customers who pay every month. Really? It would be interesting to hear what Regulators might say about that belief.

Stopping theft, fraud and revenue loss is the right thing to do, regardless of whether the recovered revenue and avoided future loss (if your utility tracks this) pays for the existence of a revenue protection department. This where organizations like IURPA can help. Whether you're new in revenue protection or a seasoned veteran, there is a network of people ready to help answer questions and share best practices to help you learn or solve issues new to your utility.

While IURPA membership remains healthy, it seems to have leveled off over recent years. Just because people move on to new assignments quicker these days, does it mean that learnings from revenue protection are forgotten in a new role? Or, do those learnings make you better in your new role? Doesn't it make sense that all areas of the utility stand to gain from protecting the revenue of the company?

A robust IURPA (and the regional organizations too) should have members from all areas of the utility. Being a member of IURPA is not limited to just people who work in revenue protection. As former revenue protection people move on to the call center, credit, operations, field and meter, dispatching, etc., maintain your IURPA membership and stay in tune with the group (IURPA and the regionals). Share knowledge with your coworkers and those filling in behind you in revenue protection. They would benefit from becoming members of IURPA too. And, attend conferences! Since revenue protection is a utility wide responsibility, a conference full of folks from all departments would likely generate some great topics on how every employee can help protect the company's revenue.

IURPA

Unfortunately, our 30th Anniversary Conference had to be cancelled this year due to the COVID-19 virus. There were many great topics and speakers lined up but everyone's safety is far more important. As always, please work safe and stay healthy.

Continued on page 3

UK SMART METER ROLLOUT! By Mike Wilkinson

By Mike Wilkinson Vice Chairman UKRPA

The UK Government had mandated that all the gas and electricity supply companies had to fit up to 53 million Smart Meters to their customers by 2020 or face potential financial penalties.

Issues have been well documented especially when the meter reading data doesn't get transferred when customers change to another supply company.

FGEM the energy government department has now delayed the end date to 2024, to allow issues to be sorted.

CANNABIS GROWS ON!!!

"Huge £4m Scunthorpe drugs factory is the biggest detective has seen in 30 years"

Humberside Police DI John Cram described the cannabis factory on Park Farm Road as a 'hugely significant find' on the 30th July 2019! A detective investigating a huge drugs factory discov-



MIKE WILKINSON

ered in Scunthorpe has said it is the biggest he has seen in 30 years of working with Humberside Police.

Officers raided a unit on the Foxhills
Industrial Estate on Monday and found
more than 15,000 cannabis plants in various
stages of cultivation, with an estimated total street
value of between £2.5 million and £4 million.
Three men were arrested after a warrant was executed at the building and a further two are wanted
by police, although officers believe the men could
be modern-day slaves living in poor conditions at
the Park Farm Road site.

The factory, described as a "very professional set-up", was uncovered following police enquiries and concerns raised by members of the public. Speaking to Scunthorpe Live, Humberside Police Detective Inspector John Cram said: "This is a hugely significant find. It is a very professional set-up which we believe to have been ongoing and operating for a period of months.

This find will greatly reduce the amount of the 'drug' getting onto the streets, and will more than likely put the price of a 'joint' up!





IN THE NEWS: Employees Help Revitalize Power Protection Association

Posted By Administration, Monday, January 27, 2020

Dedicated employees from electric cooperatives across Georgia and investor-owned utility Georgia Power formed a committee in 2019 to reinvent and revitalize what is now known as the Georgia Utility Revenue Protection Association. Their goals are to share knowledge about power theft, fraud, revenue protection and revenue recovery, and expand their reach to other utilities across Georgia.

The association's inaugural meeting in September drew more than 60 attendees representing 20 utilities from across the state and vendor Inner-Tite.

Organizations represented include:

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC

Carroll EMC

Central Georgia EMC

Cobb EMC

Coweta-Fayette EMC

Jefferson Energy

Okefenoke REMC

Satilla REMC

Sawnee EMC

Excelsior EMC Snapping Shoals EMC

Flint Energies Sumter EMC
Fort Valley Utility Commission Tri-County EMC
Georgia Power Walton EMC
GreyStone Power Washington EMC
Inner-Tite

PHOTO: The Georgia Utility Revenue Protection Association's inaugural meeting, held in September, drew more than 60 attendees. (*Courtesy of Cobb EMC, GreyStone Power Corp*)



IURPA

New and Improved IURPA website and Facebook page **By Kurt Rousell**

The IURPA Board of Directors authorized a new and improved website to replace the existing aging website. Goodlook Marketing of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was commissioned for the design and implementation of the new site. It was time for IURPA to have a more modern and functional website. Be sure to check out the site at www.iurpa.org.

The new website, with a fresher, cleaner look, is slated for full implementation in April. While the "public face" of the website provides a more professional appearance compared to the old site, members area is chock full of improvements:

- The membership directory is more robust, providing full contact information for members to stay in touch.
- Relevant PowerPoint presentations from the annual regional and international conferences are available for viewing or downloading.
- Online member registration and payment of dues will now be in a secure environment.
- In the near future, registration for IURPA conferences and hotel booking will be available.



By Kurt Rousell

When members wish to query other IURPA members regarding current "best practices," a new and improved process will be available. In the past, the requester emailed their question to the IURPA webmaster, who then sent an email to the membership. In the new environ-

ment, the requester will complete and online form, and the membership will receive the information request from the website.

- The IURPA newsletters will be available in PDF form for review.
- The Vendor Page will provide links to their websites, and a "New Products" section will allow vendors to highlight their latest offerings.

Check us out at www.facebook.com/iurpa/

For those members on Social Media, did you know that IURPA has a Facebook page. Relevant news from around the world regarding the theft of energy is posted weekly on the page. In the near future, a private "group" will be available for our members to communicate. Volunteers are also needed to serve as Administrators / Moderators. Interested in participating, email Kurt Roussell at kurt@revprosystems.com

Gas Data Analytics

By Paul Unruh, META and IURPA Chairperson

Every so often, natural gas explosions highlight the local news. The outcome is never good. Houses are destroyed and life is sometimes lost. The two newspaper articles below, found online, document these disasters. They prompt questions as AMI metering begins to take hold in the gas industry...could data analytics have warned gas company officials of the explosions in advance? Could those warnings have allowed action that could have prevented these incidents?

Articles about data analytics, particularly from the gas companies, are always welcome in this newsletter. Let this serve as an invite to submit articles about gas company data analytics for the next issue of the IURPA Newsletter, due out later in 2020.



Man Behind Deadly Indiana House Explosion/Insurance Scam Dies in Prison

February 2, 2018



The man who authorities said was the mastermind behind a deadly 2012 house explosion in Indianapolis was found dead in prison Tuesday, an Indiana Department of Correction spokesman said.

Mark Leonard, 48, was found dead around 9:15 a.m. Tuesday at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility in southwestern Indiana, department spokesman Doug Garrison said. The cause of death wasn't immediately known.

Leonard was convicted in 2015 of murder, arson and conspiracy to commit insurance fraud in the November 2012 natural gas explosion that destroyed his then-girlfriend's home and killed two next-door neighbors. That blast damaged or destroyed more than 80 homes on Indianapolis' south side. Leonard received two life sentences without parole, plus 75 years.

Leonard also was sentenced to an additional 50 years in February 2017 for trying to have a witness killed.

The Indiana Supreme Court last May rejected Leonard's appeal, affirming his convictions and sentences in the house explosion.

Authorities said Leonard was the mastermind behind the blast. They said he enlisted his then-girlfriend and three others in the plot to claim insurance money. Prosecutors said a natural gas line was tampered with and a microwave on a timer was used to ignite the explosion.

His half-brother, Bob Leonard, was also convicted of murder, arson and other charges. He received a nearly identical sentence of two consecutive life terms without parole, plus 70 years.



Illinois Street house explosion intentionally caused by homeowner; name and cause released

Victoria E. Freile, Democrat and Chronicle Published 1:26 p.m. ET Aug. 26, 2019 | Updated 7:09 p.m. ET Aug. 26, 2019

Rochester fire officials said that the explosion that obliterated a house on Illinois Street last week was **intentionally caused by the homeowner**.

The explosion "was directly and intentionally caused by the deceased, past solo occupant, **Randal Jackson**," said Felipe Hernandez Jr., executive deputy chief of the Rochester Fire Department.

The house, at 64 Illinois St., was destroyed in an explosion at 7:29 p.m. Wednesday and heavily damaged two nearby homes. Authorities on Monday afternoon confirmed that Jackson's body was recovered from the basement area of the house last week.

His cause of death is still pending an autopsy by the Monroe County Medical Examiner's Office.

Jackson, 50, purchased the home in 1998, according to city property records. Jackson had been fighting foreclosure for more than a year but ultimately lost the house in a judgment entered this past June, and it was sold at auction earlier this month, records show.



In working with crews from Rochester Gas and Electric Corp., fire officials determined that the gas service was **tampered with inside the house.**

"The meter's pressure regulator was removed from the service gas piping causing free flow of gas into the structure," Hernandez said. "The gas vent piping was also tampered with, as the inside piping fitting area had been stuffed with what appears to be paper towels, possibly to prevent the release of gas and/or odor from inside the house to the exterior."

Jackson's missing dog, Dakota, was found Friday afternoon tethered up behind the detached garage on the property, Hernandez said. The dog is being cared for by a friend of Jackson.

Hernandez said it appeared that Jackson placed his dog in a protected area behind the garage before the explosion occurred.

RG&E crews were responding to a report of an odor of natural gas outside 64 Illinois St. and called 911 to request help since the odor "was so rich and so pungent." Firefighters arrived and had parked several houses away when the house exploded.

While the explosion sent debris flying in all directions, no one was injured by that debris, which included pieces of the house and glass.



Tennessee Line Workers Rescue Motorist Trapped in Rising Floodwaters

A Tennessee woman who was trapped inside her pickup truck by rushing floodwaters is hailing electric cooperative line crews as her heroes after they rescued her from her nearly submerged vehicle.

Mountain Electric Cooperative lineworkers Rick Courtner and Cody Bryant swung the bucket of a co-op truck to free Cathy Souder of Laurel Bloomery in northeast Tennessee after a mudslide and a tree pushed her pickup off the road and into swirling floodwaters earlier this month.

"I am just fortunate to be here today. They saved my life," Souder told local reporters.

Courtner, Bryant and Mollie Ingle, a Mountain Electric meterperson, will head to the state capitol in Nashville later this week, where Tennessee House Speaker Cameron Sexton will honor them.

Officials said Souder's truck washed 300 yards downstream before becoming lodged in the middle of Laurel Creek, which was swollen by several days of rain so heavy that the Tennessee Valley Authority was forced to use its 49-dam network to move water down the Tennessee River to minimize flooding.

"I was on a service call at a house where the accident initially happened and just saw a [downed] tree at first," said Ingle. "I called 911 but at that point I didn't know there was actually a vehicle in the river until a neighbor came out and told me."

Ingle directed traffic with help from a bystander and contacted co-op crews for assistance when she realized that first responders' communications equipment wasn't getting a signal.

Courtner and Bryant rushed to the scene with lineworkers Dakota Tester and Charlie Grindstaff in a large bucket truck—a wise decision that paid off.

"I didn't know what size truck we needed when Mollie called," said Courtner. "[Fire and rescue crews] had requested a small service bucket, but we were unable to contact the service guy who drives it.

The line crews placed the vehicle along the edge of the water, where the bucket's 60-foot-reach just barely reached Souder and her truck. From inside the bucket, Courtner and Bryant were able to reach Souder and pull her to safety.

"She was sitting on the driver's side of the vehicle and was actually very calm. But you could see the fear in her eyes," said Courtner. "I talked to her, and she had to crawl out through the window. We got her to stand up on the edge of the door and then we pulled her into the bucket."

"She was clinging to Rick," said Ingle. "Everyone there was so happy."

Paramedics took Souder to a local hospital where she was later released without any injuries, according to an official at the Johnson County Sheriff's office.

The co-op crews said the rescue was all in a day's work. But Joseph Thacker, Mountain Electric's general manager, said the crews' selflessness and quick-thinking likely saved Souder's life.

"It was a very serious situation, and emergency personnel had limited options due to raging water," said Thacker. "Our lineworkers put themselves at risk every day to serve our communities. This is Mountain Electric at our best."

Victoria A. Rocha is a staff writer at NRECA.





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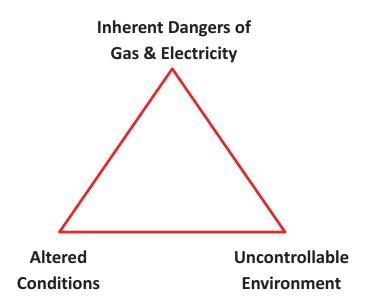
The Safety Triangle of Revenue Protection

By Kevin Lumsden
Supervisor, Baltimore Gas & Electric Theft of Energy

Every Utility Company establishes safety plans and enforces adherence with their employees to keep them safe. An approach that includes the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), training and following documented protocols is essential to mitigating the risk and liability of an injury for employees.

The prior statements *sound* correct, but they don't completely account for all the conditions a utility employee might face. The Revenue Protection department that responds to theft of service brings a significant increase in safety challenges beyond the typical employee. For starters, Revenue Protection employees are in a business where situations and encounters with the public can turn volatile in an instant. While other utility employees provide a service to customers and are there to (generally) do work that improves the customer's situation, Revenue Protection employees are there to take something away. At our utility, every other form of planned work has one or more pre notifications to the customer informing them of the work that is about to occur. Even work that disconnects service for delinquent payment has a process of prior notification. Theft is the only department that shows up unannounced and does something the occupant of the property rarely ever wants.

At BGE, we created the Safety Triangle of Revenue Protection and train employees to be conscious of three distinct challenges they face in the performance of theft of service work:



The first segment of the triangle is **Inherent Dangers**. Every utility employee who works in a gas or electric role faces inherent dangers of dealing with gas or electricity. Even when gas or electricity is operating as designed, it can be dangerous if handled improperly. Inherent dangers are where most utilities build and focus their safety plans. Incorporated are things like pedestrian and vehicular traffic, environmental conditions on job sites



and to expect the unexpected; but these topics don't completely encompass the other two segments of the triangle from the perspective of a Revenue Protection employee.

The second segment of the triangle is **Altered Conditions**. This is where normal is no longer true. An altered condition can be storm damage or a gas leak but is frequently seen in situations where utility service is bypassed using unapproved methods.

The third segment of the triangle is an **Uncontrollable Environment**. Many work sites attempt to secure the working environment using a coned off area, designated traffic control personnel or other items that isolate the employees from the general public. In an Uncontrollable Environment that is not possible. Working in a high crime or drug area, supposedly vacant buildings or exiting the property of a customer where you've just disconnected service are examples of environments that can't necessarily be controlled. Utility safety practices require 100% focus on the task in front of you but that's not possible when you have drug deals occurring within view and aggressive dogs running freely where you're getting ready to remove an overhead tap.

Dealing with either of the first two segments described in the triangle is difficult enough individually; now combine them, then perform the work in an uncontrollable environment and you have a real potential for significant safety issues. While there are no universal solutions applicable to all utilities, there are examples that are working. Below are a some of the tactics BGE adopted to address these challenges:

Continuous Training: Standard yearly refresher and operator qualification training is necessary to accommodate Inherent Dangers of the work, but specialized, focused training on Altered Conditions is equally essential. After Action briefings during meetings to discuss what worked and what needs improvement are common practice at our utility as well as "How Would You" scenarios of dealing with Altered Conditions.

Use of Two Man Crews. While admittedly challenging from a resource standpoint, the results are undisputable. Prior to teaming, we documented physical threats to our employees on a weekly basis. Since adopting a two-man team approach, our threat documentation reduced significantly. Our employees still get in very challenging situations, but one individual is far less likely to assault two utility employees, and we're seeing the positive impact of that practice.

Incorporation of Run Flat Tires. We've encountered more than our fair share of slashed tires while employees are on site but away from their vehicle. A slashed tire rendering the vehicle inoperable while dealing with an irate occupant is not a good combination. Our testing of run flat tire solutions has shown the vehicle can still be driven several miles at reasonable speeds to assure an escape is possible.

Provided Trauma Kits and Training. We enlisted training from a local law enforcement agency's field medic. These professionals know how to deal with treating a knife or bullet wound and do so with surprising success. This was a graphic and sobering experience, but we're now capable of addressing the most severe of field injuries if they occur. While we hope to never utilize this training, it's much better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it.

Conducted Proactive Safety Drills. In many circles (military, martial arts, law enforcement) you'll hear the axiom "train like you expect to fight, so you'll fight like you've been trained". We've adopted this same approach to prepare for reality. We developed hypothetical scenarios to address how we would



respond if an employee is critically or fatally injured by an irate customer and how our processes would change as a result of that injury/fatality. We then worked through these scenarios as exercise drills and documented lessons learned. Conducting these drills has become a unique and valuable learning tool.

As customer and environmental conditions change, so should a utility's approach to field safety plans. The key is to be adaptable and to make changes necessary to accommodate current working conditions. Leverage your ideas through your legal and executive channels and remain consistent and patient in your quest to continually implement better solutions to your challenges. As you develop and refine your approach to field safety, share it with your IURPA partners. It's only through sharing and collaboration that we can all grow - and given the severity of issues that can be encountered with Revenue Protection safety, sharing successful approaches could help prevent an injury or even save a life.



IURPA • 30 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 thirty years, the organization has grown from a small regional group to an association that includes representatives from utility companies around the world.

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