Thieves hit BPA substation in Chehalis, reward offered

Local News

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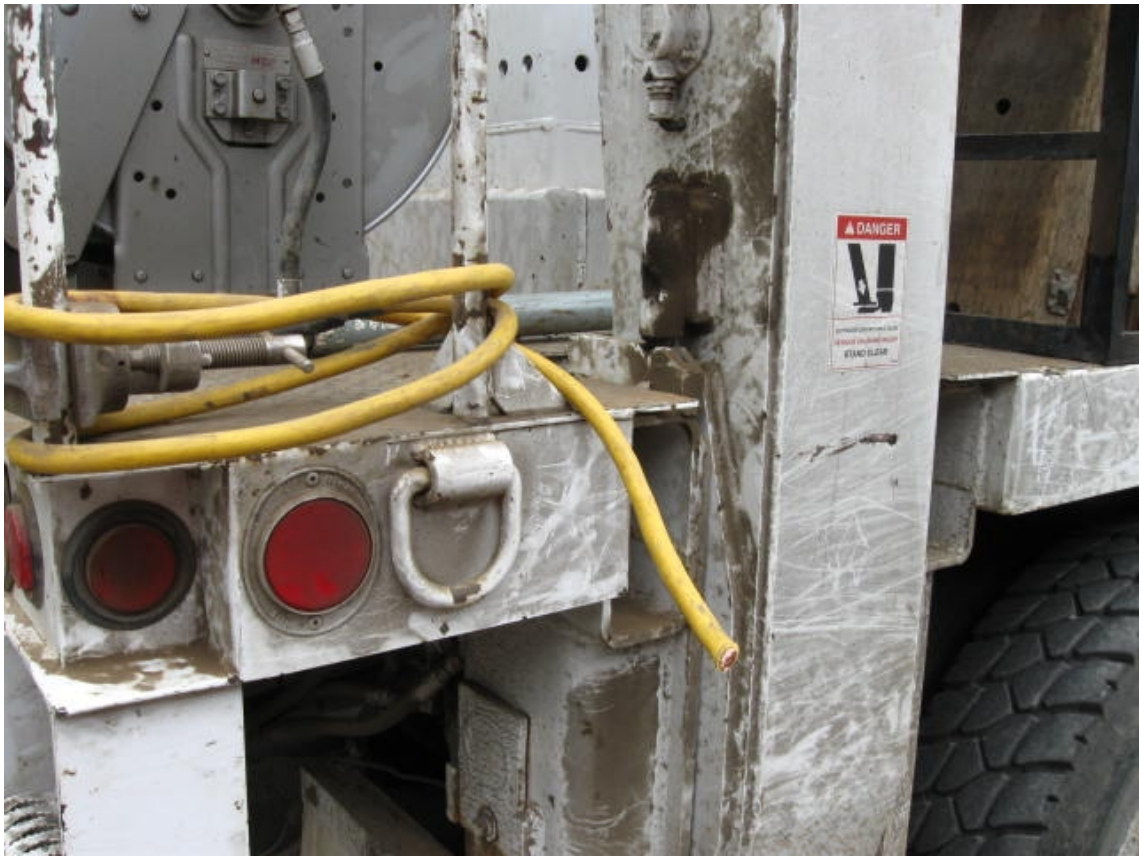

Chehalis, Wash. - Earlier this week, thieves broke into a Bonneville Power Administration substation in Chehalis, Wash., and stole copper wire, damaged equipment and stole an all-terrain vehicle used for accessing BPA rights-of-way. BPA and law enforcement officials are investigating, and BPA is offering a reward of up to $25,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible.

The incident occurred at the Chehalis Substation at 1140 Highway 603. The perpetrators cut holes in BPA fences surrounding the substation and stole property. Current cost estimates for the damage, repair and stolen materials are more than $10,000.

"Thieves continue to risk their lives to steal copper wire and other items," said Doug Johnson, BPA spokesperson. "Also, the costs associated with these thefts are ultimately paid by electricity consumers."

“We’re hoping that this information will help jog the memory of someone who may know about the break in and theft or may have seen something suspicious occurring at the substation,” said Kevin West, BPA physical security specialist, BPA physical security specialist. “Sometimes even small details can help law enforcement officials make significant investigative progress.”

Through its Crime Witness Program, BPA offers up to $25,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of individuals committing crimes against BPA facilities and infrastructure. Anyone having information is asked to call BPA's confidential and toll-free Crime Witness Hotline at (800) 437-2744 or local law enforcement.

Earlier this year, BPA made two $300 awards to individuals who provided tips on thefts BPA experienced in southwest Washington. Since 2006, BPA has paid 12 rewards totaling almost $14,000.

For more details about BPA’s Crime Witness Program, go to
http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/contact/crimewitness/index.cfm
BPA is a not-for-profit federal electric utility that operates a high-voltage transmission grid comprising more than 15,000 miles of lines and associated substations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. It also markets more than a third of the electricity consumed in the Pacific Northwest. The power is produced at 31 federal dams operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation and one nuclear plant in the Northwest and is sold to more than 140 Northwest utilities. BPA purchases power from seven wind projects and has more than 2,800 megawatts of wind interconnected to its transmission system.