

Thieves Hit BPA Substation

Local News

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Tacoma, Wash. - Late last week, Bonneville Power Administration workers discovered thieves had broken into a Bonneville Power Administration substation in Tacoma, Wash., and stole copper wire. 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 last week at the Surprise Lake substation at 712 Fife Way in Tacoma. The perpetrators cut a hole in the fence and cut 25 feet of ground copper wire from a transformer and other equipment. The damage is estimated at \$6,000.

“Thieves are endangering their lives and the safety of our employees,” said Kevin West, BPA physical security specialist. “The culprits are not only damaging the electrical infrastructure that keeps our lights on, but they’re also forcing electric ratepayers to cover the costs of this kind of senseless damage and theft.”

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. Tips can also be provided to Officer Kevin Williams of the Milton Police Department at 253-922-8735.

In 2010, 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.

“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 at the substation,” said West. “Sometimes even small details can help law enforcement officials make significant investigative progress.”

For more details about BPA’s Crime Witness Program, go to the [Crime Witness website](#). 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 3,500 megawatts of wind interconnected to its transmission system.