



EMERALD PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EPUD SUBSTATION AND WAREHOUSE YARD HIT BY METAL THEFT

Eugene, OR – Two separate Emerald People's Utility District locations were hit by metal thieves over the weekend, resulting in more than \$10,000 in estimated damages and losses. Both the warehouse yard at EPUD's Eugene office and the Cheshire Substation were burglarized. An exact account of missing and damaged items is being compiled at this time, but it appears brass and copper were the main targets of the break-in. The theft did not result in any delays or interruptions to the EPUD service area.

Thieves rifled through company vehicles and stripped copper and brass components from various pieces of equipment. They used bolt cutters to cut locks and destroy fencing. They also broke into a large transformer causing an estimated 20 gallons of non-detectable oil (containing no PCBs) to spill into the concrete yard of the warehouse.

"The frustrating thing about these thefts is not the lost material," says EPUD System Engineer Doug Barab. "The actual replacement cost is usually very small. The damage caused and labor needed to repair that damage is where the real costs are. It's so much for so little."

These are not the first thefts EPUD has experienced recently. The warehouse yard and garage were broken into in June of 2007 and a catalytic converter was cut from an employee's car in June of this year. Multiple EPUD substations have also been hit causing varied damage.

"This type of theft is very unfortunate," says EPUD General Manager Frank Lambe. "It affects all the communities and customer-owners we serve on a daily basis. We are all affected every time one of these thefts takes place."

EPUD is a member of the local Joint Utility/Public Agency Metal Theft Group that meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and address the issue of metal thefts in our communities. In addition, EPUD is working to encourage lawmakers to draft legislation in Oregon which would make it harder for thieves to profit from metal theft.

What can you do? If you see a theft in progress, call 911 and report it. Report any suspicious collections of scrap metal to the Wire Watch Hotline at 1-800-333-8328. Rewards of up to \$1000 are available if an arrest is made based on your tip.

For more information contact:
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