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Sheriff Dept. nabs vandals, earns \$4,000 Crime Witness Award

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Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, May 12, 2000

PR 56 00

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Clatsop County, Ore. — Bonneville Power Administration's Crime Witness Program and the Fort James Wauna Paper Mill awarded Clatsop County Sheriff Department \$4,000 for the arrest of vandals that shut down a local paper mill.

Vandals on Feb. 23 damaged a 230,00-volt BPA power line, resulting in a power outage that disrupted service to the Fort James Wauna Paper Mill, and surrounding area.

Investigators at first found little evidence to help them solve the crime. But that didn't sway John Svenson. Svenson, the paper mill's property protection coordinator, called Clatskanie High School and got a list of students who were absent the day of the crime. That list provided enough information for Clatsop County Sheriff Deputy Robert Burk to begin an investigation. Burk's investigation eventually led to the apprehension of two suspects, a 17 and a 19-year-old male.

Orion Albro, BPA's Olympia regional manager, presented a Crime Witness Award Check for \$3,000 to the Sheriff Department. Svenson presented the department with a \$1,000 award on behalf of Fort James Wauna Paper Mill. The awards were made in honor of Burk for his dedication as a professional law enforcement officer.

"Without his persistence, we wouldn't have apprehended anyone," said BPA security specialist Jeffrey Millenor.

Since 1994, BPA's Crime Witness Program has generated hundreds of tips resulting in dozens of arrests and thousands of dollars of recovered property, and most importantly, deterrence of future crime. In 1999, a total of 202 insulator units were replaced, representing an 88 percent decrease from the historic average of 1,723 units replaced each year prior to the institution of the program. Cumulative savings since the program began totals more than \$2,000,000. Informants can call toll free 1-800-437-2744. The identity of informants is kept strictly confidential.

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