



## Local citizen reports dangerous vandalism of power lines

### Bonneville Power Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE : MONDAY, March 25, 1996

PORTLAND, Ore. -- An investigation is underway following a report of gunshot vandalism to a Bonneville Power Administration's Oregon City - Chemawa power line. A citizen called BPA's Crime Witness Hotline and reported that his son observed suspects shooting at the transmission line on Boones Ferry Road and Prowell Road in Wilsonville, on March 11. BPA crews dispatched to the area discovered nearly \$3,000 worth of gunshot damage to insulators along the line. The Clackamas County Sheriff's office is pursuing leads from the witness' vehicle and license plate description.

Emergency repairs were required as soon as the vandalism was discovered. A BPA crew of five worked all day and de-energized the Oregon City - Chemawa line in order to make the necessary repairs. Fortunately, there were no power interruptions to customers.

Vandalism to BPA property dramatically increases during sunny weather conditions when some individuals foolishly choose shooting at power equipment as their outdoor recreation.

The Clackamas County Sheriff's Office currently has an investigation underway. **Anyone with further information that could lead to the vandals is encouraged to call BPA's Crime Witness hotline, 1-800-437-2744. Information could be worth up to \$1,000.** Witness' names are kept confidential.

BPA appreciates the alertness of citizens in the Clackamas County area to the suspicious activity. This episode is an excellent example of effective community policing applied to the region's power system. In a very real sense, the power system belongs to all the citizens and ratepayers of the region.

Theft, vandalism and illegal dumping cost BPA around \$1 million each year. These costs inevitably trickle down to ratepayers. The price to repair this latest incident is estimated at \$3,000. Had there been a power interruption for BPA's customers, the economic consequences to the surrounding communities would have been significantly higher.

More importantly, vandals shooting at insulators for fun should consider the dangers and consequences. Downed lines can cause fires and lethal ground voltages can kill or seriously injure the vandals themselves, as well as other people. Fire departments, police and hospitals are all dependent upon a reliable supply of electricity to be able to respond to emergencies. When vandals, thieves or illegal dumpers manage to put a line out of service, it's not "harmless horseplay."

In an effort to curb these infractions, BPA created the Crime Witness Program - an aggressive, large scale, neighborhood watch-style program. Again, anyone who sees or suspects a crime to the BPA transmission system, property or personnel is encouraged to report it by calling 1-800-437-2744. Cash rewards of up to \$1,000 are paid for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons

committing crimes against BPA. Names of witnesses and reward amounts are kept confidential.

"In the long-term, the Crime Witness Program should not only reduce vandalism, it should keep costs and rates down," says Robert Windus, security manager at BPA. "In the last two years, some 200 incidents have been reported. Many of these have led to arrests. Others involving illegal dumping resulted in the mess being cleaned up at the dumpers' expense - not the ratepayers. Savings to ratepayers resulting from the program now exceed \$1 million."

---

**For more informaton, contact: Gail Dreckman, BPA, (503) 230-3778, [gmdreckman@bpa.gov](mailto:gmdreckman@bpa.gov).**

---