

-For immediate release

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Greater Sudbury Hydro warns of the dangers of copper wire theft

Thieves continue to put their lives at risk

(Greater Sudbury, ON) Break-ins, vandalism, and theft continue to be an issue at electrical substations, storage yards and general infrastructure owned by utilities across North America, including Greater Sudbury Hydro (GSH). Thieves cut through fences, trespass onto property, and damage installations, in their search for copper wire.

“What they are doing is extremely dangerous. They run the risk of receiving severe electrical shock, which would likely be fatal,” said Scott Crew, GSH Operations Superintendent. “They are cutting copper bonding off of live infrastructure throughout the city, sometimes climbing tall fences and structures that are hazardous. The risk of serious injury or death is high,” he added.

There has been a significant increase in theft of copper from hydro pole lines across the city. In most cases, copper-clad steel wire, which has little to no scrap value, is taken. “Even with metal-theft prevention measures like camouflaged wire, mechanical barriers, reinforced barbed wire fencing, security signage and multiple outdoor cameras, those breaking-in are getting more brazen,” said Joan Gatien, GSH’s Purchasing Agent.

In the process, fencing gets damaged and electrical equipment is vandalized. This consumes valuable time and resources as costly repairs are required. “Copper wire theft is not only a serious safety concern for those attempting to steal, but it could also lead to electricity outages for customers as equipment requires repair,” said Crew.

Above all, safety is our top priority. GSH strongly encourages everyone to avoid damaged equipment and, if you witness a crime in progress, promptly call 911 to alert law enforcement. Your actions could help prevent serious injuries or even save a life.

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About Greater Sudbury Hydro

Greater Sudbury Hydro Inc. distributes electricity to over 48,200 customers within the City of Greater Sudbury and the Municipality of West Nipissing. We maintain 26 substations with the latest computerized technology to supply reliable electricity to residential and commercial customers, and ensure our communities have the electrical infrastructure to grow and prosper.

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