

MEDIA RELEASE

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Catching Copper Crooks

With copper reaching record prices, more and more of the precious metal is being stolen. Everything from electrical substations, rail lines, communications networks and even church steeples are targets. When copper is stolen electricity is interrupted, phone lines cut, trains cancelled and lives put in danger.

Integral Energy has had first hand experience of the copper theft problem with a number of substations being targeted. Last year the company decided to tackle the problem head on and turned to DataDot Home and Business.

“We used a comprehensive approach which included upgrading site security and using DataTraceDNA to mark copper,” explained Graham Courtney, Security Manager, Integral Energy.

According to Graham this approach is working with the company recording a 47% reduction in incidents of copper theft since introducing these new security measures.

“This reduction in theft has saved us money but more importantly improved services and safety for the community and our staff,” he added.

Across the state, Integral Energy equipment at substations, construction sites, major storage depots and field service centres, is now marked with DataTraceDNA.

DataTraceDNA offers a ground breaking approach to asset protection. Molecular Tracers, invisible to the naked eye and impossible to remove without defacing the product, are simply sprayed onto equipment.

Each Tracer is embedded with the Integral Energy business name. Police use a special digital reader to read the tracers and identify the rightful owner. Crime Stoppers Australia believes the Data Dot products, including DataTrace, can be valuable theft deterrents.

“This high tech approach to property marking was created through a joint venture that involved the CSIRO,” explained Stewart Woodger, National Manager, DataDot Home and Business.

“Every week copper theft is reported from a NSW public infrastructure site. Copper theft can be stopped by educating the community, reporting the crime and improving security measures by using products like DataTraceDNA”, added Stewart.

Federal and State Governments yesterday launched the National “Copper theft - don’t cop it” campaign, aimed at reducing copper theft by generating public awareness and encouraging reporting. Utility companies, including Integral Energy, are behind the campaign and urge the public to report copper theft to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

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