

**IN THE
news****Rental Stores
and Dealers Hit
by End-of-Year
Burglaries**

During the months of November and December, 2011, a number of equipment rental stores and dealers were victims of theft. These incidents resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars worth of merchandise.

In late November, Texas was hit by a wave of burglaries. Thieves broke into three rental stores and two dealerships in the Dallas area and two additional locations in neighboring rural areas. Hundreds of tools and large and small pieces of equipment were stolen.

During the first weekend in December, thieves cut the gates at two separate equipment rental

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**Escrow.com and the National
Equipment Register Form Strategic
Alliance to Protect Heavy-Equipment
Buyers and Sellers**

Escrow.com and the National Equipment Register (NER) have announced a strategic alliance to help equipment owners and manufacturers better manage liability and risks associated with the purchasing of used construction and agricultural equipment from sources such as online auction services, equipment wholesalers, social media websites, and individual sellers.

“Internet fraud has now become one of the biggest



issues for the global economy. It is estimated that more than a billion dollars has been lost to Internet thieves selling stolen and nonexistent equipment. Through our alliance with the National Equipment Register, we are in a position to significantly reduce the risk when buying and selling heavy equipment.” stated Brandon Abbey, president of Escrow.com.

“With transactional fraud and theft of heavy equipment remaining a problem, Escrow.com can help protect buyers and sellers during the sales process through the Escrow.com and NER IRONcheck service,” said David Shillingford, president of NER. “Escrow.com provides a crucial element to mitigate transactional risk in the used-equipment market.”

About Escrow.com

Headquartered in Rancho Santa Margarita, California, Escrow.com and its operating subsidiaries provide online escrow services that facilitate and accelerate e-commerce by assuring secure settlement.

Escrow.com is a privately held company that has pioneered the process of online escrow services. The company, founded in 1999 by Fidelity National Financial, has established itself as the leading provider of secure business and consumer transaction management on the Internet.

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yards in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. They stole trailers, mini excavators, a skid steer, and various other small pieces of equipment.

Over the same December weekend, several rental businesses were burglarized in the Los Angeles area. The offenders broke un-alarmed windows or cut through walls to enter the stores, smashed or removed computers running the alarm and security camera systems, and cut power and phone lines. The thieves took small equipment, tools, and cash.

These recent burglaries serve as warnings that equipment rental companies and dealers need to maintain constant vigilance in order to protect their premises from this kind of crime.

NER strongly recommends that law enforcement, equipment rental businesses, and dealers renew their efforts to put the brakes on this activity. Deterring this kind of theft may be as simple as upgrading monitoring equipment and implementing new security protocols.

If you are a victim of this kind of theft or want to learn more about theft prevention, contact NER at 866-663-7872 or visit us on the web at www.ner.net



Prepare now to prevent thefts in the new year

In 2010, there were more than 13,000 thefts of construction and farm equipment reported to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. There are a number of steps equipment owners can take to reduce the risk of theft:

- Test protective alarms and yard lighting to ensure they're operating properly.
- Test cameras in daylight and after dark and make sure they clearly capture license plates, faces, etc.
- Make sure fences and gates provide a complete barrier to adjoining businesses and vacant land.
- Move lightweight or highly-targeted equipment into service bays or more secure areas of your site.
- Be sure that machines' and trucks' parking areas do not provide cover for thieves.
- Conduct a security survey by walking around the site to see if there are vulnerable points of access or areas that provide cover for thieves.
- Designate staff to check the facility periodically after normal business hours.

Be aware that if you are getting a high number of false alarms, thieves may be testing your responsiveness—so watch for vehicles “casing” your property. It's a good idea to communicate with neighboring businesses, especially those which are open after business hours, and enlist their help if they see thefts in progress. You'll want to be sure that their staff have your emergency contact information.

For detailed theft prevention information, download the NER theft prevention guide at: www.ner.net/theft-prevention.html

NICB Assists in the Recovery of Nearly One Million Dollars Worth of Stolen Equipment

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), Grundy County Sheriff's Office, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division collaborated to uncover a multi-state theft ring responsible for nearly one million dollars worth of heavy equipment theft.

According to Special Agent Jimmy Carl Ball of the NICB, the investigation began when Sheriff Brent Myers received a call about a break in at a Lincoln County, Tennessee, Kubota dealership. The dealership's fence was cut, its alarm system was disabled, and several mowers were stolen. On the night of the theft, local police stopped a suspicious white truck whose owner was a person of interest to Grundy County law enforcement.

On November 11th, 2011, Sheriff Myers, the NICB, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division jointly executed a search warrant of the truck owner's property. During the search, law enforcement found the Kubota mowers as well as several other stolen John Deere agricultural machines. The Sheriff's confidential informant also divulged locations of additional stolen equipment.

The types of equipment recovered included: John Deere Gators and mowers, Bobcat skid steer loaders, Caterpillar excavators, Ford backhoes, a Dressta paving machine, and trailers. The total value of the recovered items ranges between \$750,000

and \$1,000,000. Three suspects have been arrested in connection with these thefts, while several persons of interest are still at large.

If you think that you may be a victim or may have purchased a piece of stolen equipment connected to this theft ring, Special Agent Ball suggests that you "go immediately to the local law enforcement and explain (that) you have the equipment and are willing to assist on their recovery."



Special thanks goes to Jimmy Carl Ball, Sr. (NICB); Sheriff Brent Myers (Grundy County Sheriff's Office); Scott Dickson, Troy Human, Matthew Minter, Stacy Williams of the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division; and Detective Hal Nash of the DeKalb County Alabama for their assistance in providing information for this report.



FBI-LEEDA Heavy-Equipment Theft Summit

Sponsored by: Sedgwick County Sheriff Office

Date: February 21, 2012

Location:
Sedgwick County Extension Office
7001 West 21st Street North
Wichita, KS 67205

NER On The Road



American Rental Association
THE RENTAL SHOW
 New Orleans
 February 5 – 8, 2012
 Booth # 8129
www.therentalshow.com

2012 National LICA Winter Convention

San Diego, California
 February 7 – 12, 2012
 Thursday February 9th, 9:15 a.m.
 Stacy Kaufman – NER
 and Jason Oswald – CNA Insurance
 Fleet Safety and Security
www.licanational.org/San_Diego.htm



World of Concrete
 Las Vegas
 Convention Center
 January 24 – 27, 2012
 Booth # C6388
www.worldofconcrete.com

Contact NER

Equipment owners:
 1-866-346-3746 x212
skaufman@ner.net

Insurance professionals:
 1-866-346-3746 x205
msthill@ner.net

Law enforcement:
 1-866-346-3746, Option 1
info@ner.net



www.StopEquipmentTheft.com



www.IRONcheck.com



www.IRONwatch.com

Report a theft: www.ner.net
 or fax to 201-469-2027

Sign up for theft alerts:
dmossmann@ner.net

All other inquires:
 National Equipment Register
 545 Washington Blvd., 22-19
 Jersey City, NJ 07310-1686
 Phone: 1-866-663-7872
 Fax: 201-469-2027
 E-mail: info@ner.net ■ Web: www.ner.net