

**Newsflash - 2018 11****31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 - Internal**

Every employee and contractor, working for Northern Powergrid, should go home at the end of each shift uninjured and in good health after a productive days work

## Earthing theft from Distribution substations

In recent months the incidence of theft of earthing from distribution substations in the Humber Estuary and West Yorkshire zones has increased substantially above that which we might expect to see. To date there have been more than one hundred thefts. This represents a threat to safety of staff, contractors and visitors.

It appears that the thief has been entering substations using keys and then targeting the earthing attached to the switchgear. The earthing has been dismantled rather than being cut away. On some occasions the visible earth attachment to the switchgear has been left in place whilst the earthing in the culverts has been stolen. This sometimes makes recognising the theft difficult. Clearly this presents a risk if the switchgear is operated.

Whilst all these incidents have been reported to the police we often have difficulty in identifying exactly when the earthing may have been stolen as we only inspect these substations once a year. It is therefore important that we adopt a standard approach to this type of theft. When we discover an offence we must try and maximize evidential recovery. We also need to assess if a particular offence may have been committed by the same person.

Clearly the first step in any such a process will be to address any immediate safety concerns but thereafter I would ask that you:

- Visually check the doors for any marks / evidence of forced entry?
- Note if the earthing has been stolen from the culvert and / or is still attached to the switchgear?
- Check any earthing left in situ to try and establish if the stolen portion was cut or dismantled.
- Check the inside of the substation for any unusual / discarded items such as tools, drinks cans, cigarette butts etc.( these should be left in situ and mentioned to the police at the time of reporting)
- Take some photos of the point of theft and anything unusual and send to directly to me or your PM. Please mention on the 159 that photos have been taken.



Picture of repaired Reyrolle C gear earthing post theft



Earthing repair to Reyrolle C gear post theft

If time permits and you feel able please canvas houses / people in the immediate area to find out if anybody has seen any theft taking place or noticed suspicious activity at the substation. Please also ask of they have any CCTV covering the substation at the relevant time. If somebody does give some information and/or has some useful CCTV footage please pass this directly to me by email, cross referencing the substation name and date of the theft.

All metal theft must be recorded on a 159. When doing so please make reference to the above points even if the answers are negative.

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Please also include the crime number and details of which police force and the details of the person it was reported to.

Catching this thief is going to require a determined team effort and whilst I understand that I am asking you to conduct additional checks these may well prove beneficial to us all.

Whoever is doing this is putting all substation users at risk and must be caught as soon as possible please do your bit by following this simple process. If you have any information about these thefts or see anything suspicious please contact me.



**SEAN MIDDLETON**

Security Manager  
**Castleford**

Internal: 760 5602  
Direct: 01977 605602  
Mobile: 07872 866201  
Fax: 01977 605135  
Mobex: 716 3799