

Predictions of increased precipitation due to El Niño and a potential for [light snow for Thanksgiving](#) in many areas mean that the security of snow removal equipment will again be a concern for Winter 2015/2016. This Winter Holiday Advisory serves, then, as a reminder to be on guard for equipment related crimes, and a reminder for the industry to review winter storm preparation and response plans, including equipment security.

Recent equipment theft reports to NER show a broad range of activity impacting many areas, including an increase in what appear to be organized equipment rental frauds, repeated targeting of commercial mowers and compact tractors at dealerships, and an uptick in the theft of older machines (particularly Excavators and Skid Steers).

Regardless of the situation, current patterns indicate a potential for theft and fraud in all areas, targeting many varieties of Agricultural and Construction Equipment. Christmas and New Year's fall on long weekends, which could create ideal opportunities for thieves to target idle industry sites such as lay down yards, dealerships and road projects.

What to do? See detailed theft prevention suggestions for Law Enforcement and the Equipment Industry starting on page two.

Snow Clean-up Planning

Last winter's record snow, and recent thefts of skid steers and snow blowers in northeastern states, serve as a wake-up call about snow removal equipment security. For information on what operators and Law Enforcement can do proactively to protect vulnerable equipment, see NER's Snow Equipment Advisory [here](#).

A few key points for snow equipment security:

Operators:

- Communicate – be sure tenants and businesses at the properties where equipment is staged know what should and should not be happening with your machines, and that they know how to reach you if they see something odd.
- Use lock-out devices like those from [The Equipment Lock Co](#), and a GPS system that allows you to remotely monitor equipment, like NER's [IRONWatch](#)
- Work with property managers to determine an area on the site where machines can be secured or parked where video surveillance can monitor them.

Law Enforcement:

- Bring dispatch personnel and patrol officers up to speed on this heightened problem, and the vulnerability of staged equipment in open areas
- Just because a machine is staged in a parking lot doesn't mean that operator owns the machine. Many thefts are not discovered (or reported) until the flurries start and the machines are needed. Contact NICB (800-447- 6282) for NER's ownership records to verify that an owner knows where his equipment is.

Implement Preparations Now to Prevent Thefts



Industry Preparations:

- Test to be sure that alarms and lighting are all operating properly.
- If you are getting a high number of false alarms, thieves may be testing your responsiveness; watch for vehicles “casing” your property.
- Test cameras in daylight and after dark- are the images capturing license plates, faces, etc?
- Make sure fences and gates provide a complete barrier to adjoining businesses and vacant land.
- Move light or highly targeted equipment into service bays or more secure areas of your site.
- Do not leave ANYTHING on a trailer. If you have to, block it with several other vehicles.
- Conduct a security survey of your site- walk around the property to see if there are vulnerable points of access or cover.
- Communicate with neighboring businesses, especially those which will be open during the holiday; raise their awareness so that thefts in progress are recognized, and be sure their staff have your emergency contact information.
- Designate someone to check up on yards and sites at different times during the holiday.
- Should a break-in or theft occur, be prepared to respond:
 - Beforehand, determine what police agency to report to and do so quickly when a theft or attempted break-in is discovered.
 - Get information on what was stolen out to other companies and clients as soon as possible.
 - Report any thefts to NER as soon as is practical, and contact NER on any equipment identification/Serial Number questions.
- Review your fleet inventory:
 - Update new equipment.
 - Physically verify serial numbers/PINs- is what’s on the machine PIN plate accurately recorded in your records?
 - Update your NER fleet registration, and be sure your emergency contact details are accurate on NER.

For detailed theft prevention information, download the NER theft prevention guide at:

www.ner.net/theft-prevention.html

Law Enforcement Preparations:

- Talk to the Patrol units working the holidays- be sure they are aware of the heightened equipment theft threat.
- Be sure Patrol and Dispatch have a fundamental understanding of how to spot an equipment theft, and how to contact NICB for assistance (800-447-6282).
- NICB can provide NER's owner records on millions of machines including most rental equipment.
- NER maintains emergency contact information for all owners, fleets and rental companies registered with NER.
- **NCIC cannot confirm a machine is NOT STOLEN- Contact NICB for NER ownership information on any suspicious machine.**

Be On The Look Out!

Heavy Equipment will be stolen Nationwide before and during the Holidays



NER asks both Law Enforcement and the Industry to be watchful of rental facilities, dealerships, farms and construction sites for activity that seems out of place:

- Trucks parked at rental yards and dealerships that do not belong to the company- especially box vans, U-hauls and enclosed car hauler type trailers.
- Gates left open at facilities and job sites when it's clear the site is closed.
- Evening, late night or early morning activity inside a yard, construction site, farm or store throughout the holiday.
- Heavily and hastily loaded rental company or dealer trucks on roadways throughout the holiday.

Law Enforcement personnel are encouraged to verify ownership or rental status on any equipment in transit as it may be an undiscovered theft. Contact NICB for access to NER's ownership registration and fleet records:
800-447-6282

Industry personnel are encouraged to contact local Law Enforcement on suspicious activity. Being in the industry you know when something does not seem right - don't let it just go. Call **911**