

[in the news](#)[home](#) [site search](#) [org chart](#) [contact us](#) [web comments](#)

---

## ***BPA offers up to \$1,000 for information on repeated power line vandalism***

---

[Click here for other BPA news releases](#)

---

### **Bonneville Power Administration**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY, September 30, 1999**

PR 63 99

*CONTACTS: Mike Berg, BPA (503) 230-4274  
or Gail Dreckman, BPA (503) 230-3778*

---

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – The Bonneville Power Administration is offering up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals who caused an estimated \$6,000 damage to a power line located just west of Missoula, Montana on Albert Creek on Saturday, Sept. 25. This is the second incident of vandalism to occur in Western Montana in the last two weeks.

The Garrison Taft 500 thousand-volt transmission line runs east west through parts of Mineral, Missoula, Granite and Powell Counties, Montana. The vandalism occurred on tower number 89/1, which is just west of Missoula, Montana near Albert Creek.

Vandals shot out insulators on BPA's Garrison – Taft 500 kV line sometime before 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25. The incident caused the line to be out of service for over 10 hours. Fortunately, there was no disruption of electrical service to customers. Switching operations enabled BPA to provide alternative pathways for electrical power delivery while repairs were being made. The cost of repairs gets passed on to ratepayers. A similar incident occurred on Sept. 11.

This is the second such incident over a two week period in which major transmission lines in Western Montana have been disabled due to acts of vandalism. The

earlier incident occurred on Saturday, September 11, on BPA's Dworshak-Taft Line just 27 miles south of Taft. Taft is just off of Interstate 90 and US Highway 10 near the Continental Divide and the State Line separating Mineral County, Montana, from Shoshone County, Idaho.

"There are no suspects, but the likely perpetrators are young adults shooting at insulators," explained BPA Security Specialist Mike Berg. "High voltage power lines also pose an enormous risk to anyone who shoots at them. Downed power lines can cause fires and lethal ground voltages can kill or injure the vandals and others in the area. This is a particular concern during periods of dry weather, such as we've been experiencing lately."

The Crime Witness Program was created by BPA in 1994 as a cost-effective way to involve the public in combating crimes that could potentially cause power outages. Through its neighborhood watch-style

program, BPA offers cash rewards up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of perpetrators.

The program has resulted in a favorable downward trend in the number of insulator units replaced. Since 1994, the Crime Witness Program has generated hundreds

of telephone tips resulting in dozens of arrests, thousands of dollars of recovered property and, most importantly, deterrence of future crime. Estimated savings since the program began totals more than \$600,000. Informants can call toll free 1-800-437-2744. The identity of informants is kept strictly confidential.

# # #

---