

2014 legislative agenda

Chugach will be discussing a range of issues with legislators during the second session of the 28th Legislature.

Grid unification

For decades much of the planning and operation of the Railbelt generation and transmission system was done by Chugach on behalf of itself and the three other utilities that purchased power under wholesale contracts. With both Homer Electric Association and Matanuska Electric Association choosing to build their own generation and go on their own as their contracts expire, challenges have emerged for the interconnected regional grid.

Chugach has been working with other utilities and the Alaska Energy Authority on

strategies to optimize the reliable generation and transmission of electricity for Alaskans throughout the region. After studying the evolution of grids in the Lower 48, Chugach has determined that creating an Independent System Operator for the Railbelt may be the best way forward. An ISO is a non-profit independent cooperation representing stakeholders that performs vital functions, including:

- Mandate non-discriminatory open access transmission
- Enforce reliability standards
- Plan transmission additions and upgrades
- Manage the interconnection of new generation
- Develop a single transmission charge for the

regional grid

- Resolve transmission congestion
- Maximize generation efficiency

Chugach will be discussing the ISO concept with legislators this session. The best course of action may be legislation directing that the Regulatory Commission of Alaska task the utilities with devising a plan to meet specific objectives like those noted above.

Capital projects

Through its membership in the regional generation & transmission organization known as ARCTEC (Alaska Railbelt Cooperative Transmission & Electric Company), Chugach is supporting funding for the following capital projects:

\$24 million for the State's half of the Battle Creek diversion at the Bradley Lake Hydroelectric Project

\$4.5M to rebuild the 115-kilovolt transmission line between Silvertip Creek and the Hope Substation

\$4.5M to rebuild the 115-kv transmission line between Powerline Pass and Indian.

\$4M for work on a Fossil Creek Substation on the Eklutna transmission line.

Watana hydro project

Chugach continues to support the efforts by the Alaska Energy Authority to advance plans for a major new hydroelectric project for the Railbelt.

See Legislative, page 2

Copper theft at substation dangerous and costly

In July 2013 Chugach discovered that metal thieves had cut the fence to gain access to the Daves Creek Substation near Cooper Landing. Once inside, they proceeded to cut and remove a number of copper ground wires on electrical structures and equipment within the substation. Ground wires are safety features that ensure that any voltage or current that inadvertently energizes equipment or fencing is safely dissipated through the ground grid. Removing the ground wires creates a potential shock/electrocution hazard

for both utility workers and members of the public. In the Lower 48, thieves have been electrocuted trying to steal metal from substations.

More than likely, the stolen copper was sold for scrap. Utilities around the country have suffered from this type of theft in recent years. Homer Electric Association was also the victim of copper theft at one of its substations on the Kenai Peninsula last year.

For Chugach and its customers, the theft was not just

dangerous. It cost \$9,200 for material and labor to replace the stolen wire and repair the substation. It also caused 80 minutes of outage time for customers in Cooper Landing and Moose Pass.

Chugach and other organizations will be seeking legisla-



In 2013 thieves stole copper ground wires from the Daves Creek Substation near Cooper Landing.

tion to address metals theft in 2014.

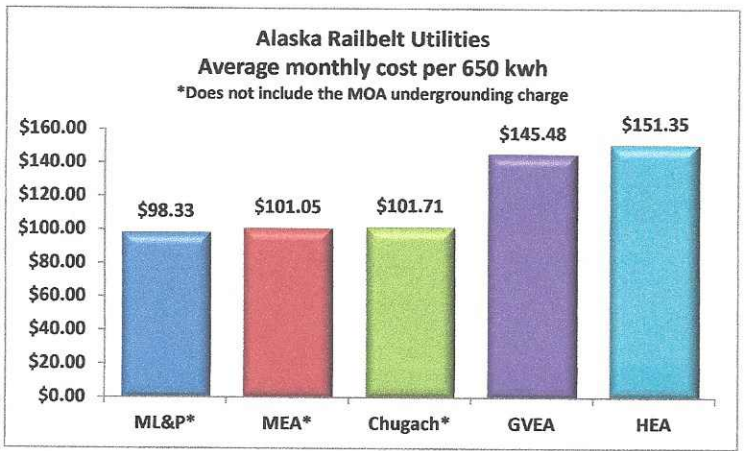
RCA approves rate changes

In January the Regulatory Commission of Alaska approved changes to both base rates and the fuel and purchased power charges for Chugach customers.

The change to base rates was driven by Homer Electric Association leaving the Chugach system when its contract to buy wholesale power expired

at the end of 2013. HEA customers also saw increases in their January bills as the Kenai-Peninsula-based cooperative began paying for natural gas for its power plants.

The graph shows the cost of 650 kwh of residential service for customers of five different Railbelt utilities. {186077}



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whether it's time to upgrade to more efficient products. Stop by the Chugach office to check out your Kill-A-Watt meter today. Please note that the rentals are first come, first serve.

Legislative (cont'd from page 1)

RCA sunset

House Bill 234 would extend the termination date for the RCA to June 30, 2022. Chugach feels the RCA performs a vital public service and its operations should be continued.

Metals theft

Alaska may be the only state

in the nation that has not yet enacted legislation to address metals theft. In 2013 thieves stole copper from a Chugach substation on the Kenai Peninsula (see story, page 1). Chugach has been working with the Associated General Contractors of Alaska and other organizations on proposed legislation.

Annual meeting and election notes

Chugach's annual membership meeting will be held on Thursday, May 22, 2014 at the Denaina Civic & Convention Center.

Three directors will be elected to the Chugach board in the upcoming 2014 election. In 2013, members passed a by-law changing board members'

terms from three years to four. As part of that transition, two directors will be elected to 4-year terms and one director to a 3-year term in 2014.

Members who are interested in either meeting with and being considered by the Nominating Committee or running by petition as a director candidate should call 762-4791 to obtain a candidate packet. Candidate applications and resumes for the Nominating Committee's review must be received by 5 p.m., Friday, Feb. 21, 2014.

Candidate nominations should be submitted to:

Tom Schulman
PO Box 196300
Anchorage, AK 99519-6300
tom_schulman@chugachelectric.com

More information and forms may be found at www.chugachelectric.com or by calling 762-4177.

Contact us

Hours	Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
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The Chugach Outlet

A Publication of Chugach Electric Association, Inc.
5601 Electron Drive • P.O. Box 196300 • Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6300

Monthly residential service costs (based on 650 kwh)	
Customer charge/month	\$ 8.00
Energy charge \$0.09432 x kwh =	\$61.31
Fuel \$0.03807 x kwh =	\$24.75
Purchased power \$0.00881 x kwh =	\$5.73
FIW renewable energy adj. \$0.00239 x kwh =	<u>\$1.55</u>
<small>(Energy charge, Fuel, Purchased power and FIW renewable energy adjustment factors effective Jan. 1, 2014.)</small>	
Subtotal	101.34
2% MOA Undergrounding Charge =	\$ 2.03
Regulatory Cost Charge \$0.000578 x kwh =	<u>\$ 0.38</u>
Total bill	\$103.75

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CHUGACH
POWERING ALASKA'S FUTURE

DATE: July 1, 2013

Contact: Tom Parker, Georgia Transmission Corporation
(770) 270-7050
tom.parker@gatrans.com

Enhanced metals theft laws contribute to reduced crime *One year in, Georgia Transmission has seen reduction in copper theft*

TUCKER, Ga. (July 1, 2013) – Georgia Transmission reports a significant reduction in metals theft at the utility's substations since new state laws were enacted one year ago. Designed to curb a steady rise in metals theft incidents across the state, the enhanced legislation went into effect July 1, 2012.

Over the last year, Georgia Transmission, which builds and maintains high-voltage transmission lines and substations, has seen fewer incidences of theft, greater collaboration between other utilities and law enforcement agencies, and increased educational opportunities for both recyclers and investigators.

Georgia Transmission, working with its various partners in the utilities industry and law enforcement, was a strong advocate for House Bill 872, which overhauled the existing framework of metals theft laws last year.

"The legislation, coupled with a host of other efforts we've undertaken with our partners, has resulted in a dramatic drop in theft at our substations," said Mike Smith, president and CEO of Georgia Transmission. "We take metals theft seriously because it's a major safety issue for our employees, and this legislation has given law enforcement and our investigators additional resources needed to protect our employees."

Among the significant changes to the state's existing laws, recyclers are now required to take a photograph of the seller and the scrap metal being sold, photocopy the seller's driver's license and record the seller's vehicle tag number. The new law also requires sellers to sign a sworn affidavit stating the metal was not stolen.

Georgia Transmission saw a reduction in crimes when the law went into effect. In 2011, the utility reported 127 theft incidents. That number fell to 83 in 2012. A closer look at the data revealed an even more stark drop with the organization reporting 60 incidents of metals theft from July through December 2011, but only 26 during the same time frame a year later with the enhanced laws in place. That trend has continued through 2013, with only 24 incidents reported from January through April of this year, compared to 49 in January through April of 2012.

“Overall, the 2012 legislation, coupled with aggressive investigation and prosecution efforts, has made a positive impact for the utility industry in our ongoing battle against metals thefts,” said Lee Swann, the lead investigator for Georgia Transmission. “Although we have seen a reduction in metals thefts overall, this will continue to be a priority for Georgia Transmission because every incident of theft can put our employees at risk. It’s important we remain vigilant in our efforts to investigate and prosecute in coordination with law enforcement and the courts.”

About Georgia Transmission

Georgia Transmission, a not-for-profit cooperative owned by 39 Electric Membership Corporations (EMCs), owns more than 3000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines and more than 600 substations. These facilities deliver power to Georgia’s EMCs who serve nearly 50 percent of Georgia’s population (4.5 million).

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Ex-worker sentenced in mine copper theft

Posted: Friday, August 07, 2009

FAIRBANKS - A former Pogo Mine employee convicted of stealing more than \$90,000 in copper wire was sentenced to two months in jail.

Simeon Staley, 27, pleaded guilty to second-degree theft earlier this year and was sentenced Wednesday.

He and a co-defendant, Mark Garwood, 45, also were ordered to pay restitution to the mine.

Prosecutor Scott Mattern sought the two-month sentence.

"It started out with them just taking garbage, but the problem is that it's Pogo's garbage and it's up to them what they want to do with it," he said.

Pogo Mine officials became suspicious of Garwood and Staley in March 2008 after wire and other items, such as tires, disappeared over six months.

Authorities said Staley would load the wire and other items onto a semi operated by Garwood.

Garwood, employed with the same trucking company for nearly 20 years, was fired soon after the charges were filed.

Superior Court Judge Randy Olsen said jail time was necessary because of the large amount stolen. He called the theft outrageous.

Stolen Copper Returned to Co-op

Posted By [Michael W. Kahn](#) On September 23, 2013 @ 3:03 am In [Copper Theft](#) | Comments Disabled

An electric cooperative has its stolen copper wire back, thanks to surveillance video, quick work by law enforcement and a suspect's decision that helped lead police right to him.



[1]

In this still from a surveillance video, the arrow points to a suspected thief with a roll of copper, inside the Berkeley Electric Cooperative truck shed. (Photo By: Berkeley EC)

Berkeley Electric Cooperative had just over 300 pounds of copper stolen from its Moncks Corner, S.C., facility in the early hours of Sept. 6.

"They came in to our property through one of the fences and they went to our truck shed," said Micah Ponce, corporate communications specialist at Berkeley EC. [2] "They went from truck to truck getting copper."

But in the morning, when the theft was discovered, co-op officials and law enforcement were able to pull the surveillance video.

"We did have a videotape of the suspects stealing the copper," Ponce said, noting that Berkeley EC has "full camera coverage."

"There are cameras throughout the entire pole yard area. They cover basically every inch of the pole yard and the truck sheds," Ponce told ECT.coop.

After seeing the tape, authorities went straight to the nearest scrap yard—just four miles south of the co-op's headquarters.

"The clerk remembered somebody acting kind of funny," Ponce said. That man turned out to be Deandre Rochard Weathers, 20.

"The guy had used his real name and real ID, so the police were able to identify him quickly," Ponce said.

The yard said it paid Weathers nearly \$900 for the copper wire, all of which was returned to Berkeley EC.

Weathers surrendered to authorities Sept. 12 and was charged with receiving stolen goods. Police were looking for the second suspect seen on the co-op video.

Berkeley EC is no stranger to copper theft. In April, a suspected copper thief was found dead in a co-op substation, [3] where copper wiring had been cut.

Article printed from Electric Co-op Today: <http://www.ect.coop>



Worker Charged in Copper Wire Theft at UAF Site

POSTED: 11:23 AM AKST Jan 16, 2014 UPDATED: 11:23 AM AKST Jan 16, 2014



FAIRBANKS, Alaska -

A 33-year-old construction worker is accused of stealing one ton of copper wire at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner says Eric Brandon Bailey of Fairbanks was arraigned Tuesday on a charge of second-degree felony theft.

Campus police received a report about the alleged theft last week from a utility tunnel under a dormitory.

A large amount of copper wire was being replaced at a construction site. According to a criminal complaint, the old wire was set to be salvaged for UAF's construction project fund.

Police say Bailey and an unnamed accomplice received \$3,857 from a local scrap yard for the wire.

The accomplice has not been charged.

It's unclear if Bailey has an attorney. He could not immediately be reached for comment Thursday.

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Second suspect named in UAF scrap copper theft - Fairbanks Daily News-Miner: Local News

[Fairbanks Daily News-Miner](#)

Second suspect named in UAF scrap copper theft

Posted: Sunday, January 19, 2014 12:00 am

Second suspect named in UAF scrap copper theft Sam Friedman/sfriedman@newsminer.com

FAIRBANKS — A second suspect has been named in the alleged theft of about one ton of scrap copper from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Criminal summons were issued Thursday for James David Joseph Algarin, 26, a contract worker accused of working with an accomplice to sell the metal for \$3,857 at a salvage yard.

A previous court document identified fellow contract worker Eric Brandon Bailey, 33, of Fairbanks, as Algarin's alleged accomplice. The two men were employed on a construction site at the utility corridor beneath the Nerland Hall dormitory where a large quantity of copper wire was being replaced, according to the criminal complaints written by the university police department.

The theft was reported Jan. 7. The replaced wire was cut into 6-foot lengths and was supposed to be salvaged, with the money returned to the university construction project fund. Instead, the men are accused of loading the wire into a Fullard Electric truck and taking it to a home, where later on the same day they allegedly transferred it to a personal vehicle and sold it at C&R Pipe. The men split the money, according to the criminal complaints.

Bailey was arraigned Tuesday, and his \$250 bond also was posted Tuesday, according to online court records. Algarin's first court date is not listed.

Contact staff writer Sam Friedman at 459-7545.



Home

APD Takes Down Copper Wire Thieves (UPDATE: Escapee caught)

Copper wire thieves have stolen more than \$100,000 worth of wire since March
By Kate McPherson



UPDATE, Saturday, August 11 - Anchorage police found and arrested Shawn Rebisch Friday night, according to APD Detective Darren Hernandez. Rebisch had been on the run since July 31 after escaping custody at the Cordova Center.

He's charged with escaping detention which is a Class B Felony.

That charge is on top of the multiple theft and trespass charges. His arraignment is set for Saturday.

UPDATE - Shawn Rebisch was in custody at the Cordova Center corrections facility in downtown Anchorage on Tuesday, where he was about to be served the arrest warrant for multiple first-degree theft charges of the copper wire and criminal trespass. Shawn saw the Department of Corrections van and when his name was called, he escaped using an emergency exit door on the first floor. Police are currently looking for him around Anchorage. His brother Michael has been arraigned on the copper wire theft charges and is in custody.

ANCHORAGE - Copper wire thieves have hit Anchorage businesses hard this year, stealing more than \$100,000 worth of wire since March. Now, Anchorage police said they believe they've caught the ringleaders.

Michael Rebisch, 45, and Shawn Rebisch, 32, are charged with multiple counts of theft and criminal trespass.

Police said the brothers are the main players in a string of thefts from small and large construction and electrical companies across Anchorage.

Two other people are also charged and police have more suspects being investigated.

Detectives said the motive behind the thefts is most likely drugs, which became evident when the searched some of the suspects' cars.

"We had search warrants to search all three vehicles, and in all three vehicles paraphernalia was found," said APD theft detective Darren Hernandez. "A mass amounts of syringes."

Police said they believe Shawn Rebisch knows how to operate heavy machinery and is skilled in electronics, which helped him break into construction yards.

"With the forklift they can actually lift these large spools of copper wire and lift them up into dump trucks and take them away," said Hernandez.

Hernandez said copper thefts are more prominent in town this year and the scrap metal companies that buy the stolen goods should be more alert.

"If these people are coming in and not represented by a company then most likely it's stolen," said Hernandez.

The president of Anchorage business Raven Electric, Don Lederhos, has worked with the company since 1978. He says the first copper theft he can remember was in 2008 and they've been increasing ever since.

"They cut through that fence, we've replaced that fence probably six or seven times, and that's been quite expensive and they just keep coming back and doing it again," said Lederhos.

The company invested in a higher-level security system, which recently paid off.

"The people were in the yard getting ready to haul the copper out and they were caught red handed," said Lederhos.

This article originally stated Shawn Rebisch escaped Thursday morning; police clarified he escaped on Tuesday, July 31.

Related Content

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- [Police Seek Suspect After Abduction](#)

2 charged in scrap metal theft

The Associated Press | Posted: Tuesday, May 7, 2013 8:37 am

KODIAK, Alaska — Two men in Kodiak are accused of stealing scrap metal valued at more than \$5,700.

The Kodiak Daily Mirror (<http://is.gd/hjXdgU>) says 49-year-old Timothy Kimmel and 27-year-old Walter Erickson are each charged with three counts of theft. The two were arrested by Alaska State Troopers in late April.

Authorities say brass valves and copper wire were stolen from Nick's Auto Wrecking Salvage and Metal Recycling. The thefts were reported in March.

The items were tracked to another Kodiak scrap metal dealer.

According to authorities, the dealer said he received the goods from Kimmel and the dealer also identified Erickson as a man who accompanied Kimmel.

Court-appointed attorneys for the men could not immediately be reached for comment Monday afternoon.

Two more arrested in MTA theft

Pair of suspects found on ferry; authorities still seeking another

BY ANDREW WELLNER
Frontiersman | Updated Dec 7, 2011

PALMER — Though the ship was loaded with state legislators on the way to Juneau, it was two other passengers who got the most attention.

Juneau police, working with their colleagues in Palmer, agreed to meet the ferry Tustumena at the dock.

According to a Juneau Police Department press release, at high noon on Saturday officers went to the ship and arrested Robert Stevens, 43, of Oregon, and Robert Ristick, 40, of Washington, both on \$100,000 warrants.

The Juneau press release is decidedly brief. To get to the heart of why Stevens and Ristick were arrested, you have to talk to Palmer Police Department Detective Sgt. Kelly Turney.

Turney said the two men were tied up in a case that has been occupying most of his time over the past week — the theft of \$114,500 in copper wire from the Matanuska Telephone Association in Palmer.

Turney said Ristick, Stevens, and a third man, Jeff Davis, had been traveling around the state buying scrap metal. Davis is still at large, Turney said. He also said he didn't know if Davis was still in Alaska.

"He didn't get on the boat with them in Kodiak," Turney said.

Turney believes that before and after the theft in Palmer, the three men were traveling around the state looking for scrap. He said he knew they'd been to Fairbanks, North Pole, Kodiak, Valdez and Anchorage.

"I know they've been in those areas. Now, I'm not saying that every time they've gone out they have purchased scrap illegally," Turney said.

And, he said, his main focus is to nail down all the details of the theft in Palmer, although that doesn't mean there isn't a lot of work to do.

"You just want to make sure you cover all the bases so you give a good case (to the district attorney)," Turney said.

The arrest of Stevens and Ristick brings the total number of arrests in the case to three.

The first person arrested, Howard Tresham, is a 25-year employee of MTA. Police say they have charged him with the current theft and with a previous one in December.

The current theft saw eight reels of heavy-duty cable — about 30,000 feet worth — go missing from the lot. It was recovered in Anchorage where it was due to be shipped out of state. The December theft involved half that much material, which hasn't been recovered.

Turney said the eight reels of wire went missing Jan. 9. The driver who'd been called to pick up the cable in Palmer and take it to Anchorage picked Tresham out of a group of photos as the person who had let him into the lot that day.

The plan, as far as police can discern it, was to ship the cable to Washington, then sell it as scrap. Turney said he recovered most of the \$5,000 that Tresham was paid for the cable.

As for the arrests in Juneau, Turney said he wouldn't have been able to do it without help from the various agencies around the state. He said he would call officers at the relevant departments and within five minutes someone would be out on the streets, asking questions and relaying the information back to him.

Juneau, he said, called in an investigator to interview Ristick and Stevens even though it was a weekend.

"I can't thank Juneau PD and Kodiak PD, the (Alaska State) Troopers and state ferry officials enough," Turney said. "I can't be all of those places."

As for who else was on the ferry, Turney confirmed the Tustumena was bringing a load of state legislators and their vehicles to the capitol for the start of this year's legislative session. Of course, that fact doesn't really figure in to his case.

"It's just kind of an interesting twist," he said.

Contact Andrew Wellner at andrew.wellner@frontiersman.com or 352-2270.

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Home > Big copper theft at site of new state crime lab

Alaska Dispatch

January 19, 2011

Main Image Caption:

Big copper theft at site of new state crime lab

According to KTVA ^[1]-TV a big stack of large-diameter copper tubing was recently stolen from the construction site of what will become the state's new crime lab. Authorities say the valuable construction material had to have been stolen by people with access to equipment heavy enough to lift the booty, and they're asking for help to track down the thieves and locate the piping. Options to unload the stolen goods are few, say authorities. Aside from being sold for scrap, the piping could also wind up at another construction site, they say. Watch the report, and see the widest copper pipe you may have ever seen, here ^[1]. It's unclear how this theft may affect the final cost of the new lab, but Alaska Beat doubts last year's critics of the lab's estimated cost were taking theft into account -- perhaps because the site of the new lab sits between the Tudor Road headquarters of the Anchorage Police Department and the Alaska State Troopers.

Source URL: <http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/big-copper-theft-site-new-state-crime-lab>

Links:

[1] http://www.ktva.com/local/ci_17131183