



Sentencing Council Publishes Guideline for Electricity Theft Offences

7th October 2015

Yesterday the Sentencing Council published a [revised guideline](#) for judges and magistrates on the sentencing of theft offences. The guideline, which has been issued following a public consultation, will come into effect on 1st February 2016.

For the first time, the guideline now includes specific advice for judges and magistrates passing sentence for illegal abstraction of electricity. Energy Theft affects all energy consumers' bills – in that sense we are all victims of the crimes that take place. The UKRPA was pleased to participate within the consultation process, and welcome today's publication. The inclusion of specific guidelines for electricity theft is a positive move, and reflects the serious impact that it can have on both livelihoods and communities.

However, the UKRPA is disappointed that theft of gas does not receive the same attention despite also being a crime under Section 1 of the Theft Act 1968. The impacts of the theft of gas can be devastating; an explosion caused by tampering with the gas supply can cause damage to entire streets and poses a serious threat to life and property.

In the coming months, as a central part of its [published strategy](#), the UKRPA will be examining steps that will improve successful prosecutions, including how best to work with the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, and the Sentencing Council.

We look forward to working with the Sentencing Council, Judges and Magistrates, to ensure that, sentences when passed, reflect the seriousness of the individual crimes being committed.

Notes to the editors:

The United Kingdom Revenue Protection Association (UKRPA) is a trade association for parties involved in detecting and dealing with meter tampering and the illegal abstraction of electricity, gas and water, and for providers of products and services to those parties. The UKRPA currently has a total of sixteen members, working in both gas and electricity revenue protection areas across Great Britain and Northern Ireland, also providing more specialist products and services (e.g. metering).

The UKRPA is administered by Gemserv Limited, and currently provides a 24-hour online facility for the public to anonymously report instances of energy theft.

For more information about the UKRPA, visit www.ukrpa.co.uk or contact the UKRPA on 0207 090 1070.