

**IN THE  
news****Rental Stores  
and Dealers Hit  
by End-of-Year  
Burglaries**

**D**uring the months of November and December, 2011, a number of equipment rental stores and dealers were victims of theft. These incidents resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars worth of merchandise.

In late November, Texas was hit by a wave of burglaries. Thieves broke into three rental stores and two dealerships in the Dallas area and two additional locations in neighboring rural areas. Hundreds of tools and large and small pieces of equipment were stolen.

During the first weekend in December, thieves cut the gates at two separate equipment rental

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**Escrow.com and the National  
Equipment Register Form Strategic  
Alliance to Protect Heavy-Equipment  
Buyers and Sellers**

**E**scrow.com and the National Equipment Register (NER) have announced a strategic alliance to help equipment owners and manufacturers better manage liability and risks associated with the purchasing of used construction and agricultural equipment from sources such as online auction services, equipment wholesalers, social media websites, and individual sellers.

“Internet fraud has now become one of the biggest



issues for the global economy. It is estimated that more than a billion dollars has been lost to Internet thieves selling stolen and nonexistent equipment. Through our alliance with the National Equipment Register, we are in a position to significantly reduce the risk when buying and selling heavy equipment.” stated Brandon Abbey, president of Escrow.com.

“With transactional fraud and theft of heavy equipment remaining a problem, Escrow.com can help protect buyers and sellers during the sales process through the Escrow.com and NER IRONcheck service,” said David Shillingford, president of NER. “Escrow.com provides a crucial element to mitigate transactional risk in the used-equipment market.”

**About Escrow.com**

Headquartered in Rancho Santa Margarita, California, Escrow.com and its operating subsidiaries provide online escrow services that facilitate and accelerate e-commerce by assuring secure settlement.

Escrow.com is a privately held company that has pioneered the process of online escrow services. The company, founded in 1999 by Fidelity National Financial, has established itself as the leading provider of secure business and consumer transaction management on the Internet.

## IN THE news

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yards in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. They stole trailers, mini excavators, a skid steer, and various other small pieces of equipment.

Over the same December weekend, several rental businesses were burglarized in the Los Angeles area. The offenders broke unalarmed windows or cut through walls to enter the stores, smashed or removed computers running the alarm and security camera systems, and cut power and phone lines. The thieves took small equipment, tools, and cash.

These recent burglaries serve as warnings that equipment rental companies and dealers need to maintain constant vigilance in order to protect their premises from this kind of crime.

NER strongly recommends that law enforcement, equipment rental businesses, and dealers renew their efforts to put the brakes on this activity. Deterring this kind of theft may be as simple as upgrading monitoring equipment and implementing new security protocols.

*If you are a victim of this kind of theft or want to learn more about theft prevention, contact NER at 866-663-7872 or visit us on the web at [www.ner.net](http://www.ner.net)*



### Prepare now to prevent thefts in the new year

In 2010, there were more than 13,000 thefts of construction and farm equipment reported to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. There are a number of steps equipment owners can take to reduce the risk of theft:

- Test protective alarms and yard lighting to ensure they're operating properly.
- Test cameras in daylight and after dark and make sure they clearly capture license plates, faces, etc.
- Make sure fences and gates provide a complete barrier to adjoining businesses and vacant land.
- Move lightweight or highly-targeted equipment into service bays or more secure areas of your site.
- Be sure that machines' and trucks' parking areas do not provide cover for thieves.
- Conduct a security survey by walking around the site to see if there are vulnerable points of access or areas that provide cover for thieves.
- Designate staff to check the facility periodically after normal business hours.

Be aware that if you are getting a high number of false alarms, thieves may be testing your responsiveness—so watch for vehicles “casing” your property. It's a good idea to communicate with neighboring businesses, especially those which are open after business hours, and enlist their help if they see thefts in progress. You'll want to be sure that their staff have your emergency contact information.

*For detailed theft prevention information, download the NER theft prevention guide at: [www.ner.net/theft-prevention.html](http://www.ner.net/theft-prevention.html)*

## NICB Assists in the Recovery of Nearly One Million Dollars Worth of Stolen Equipment

The National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), Grundy County Sheriff's Office, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division collaborated to uncover a multi-state theft ring responsible for nearly one million dollars worth of heavy equipment theft.

According to Special Agent Jimmy Carl Ball of the NICB, the investigation began when Sheriff Brent Myers received a call about a break in at a Lincoln County, Tennessee, Kubota dealership. The dealership's fence was cut, its alarm system was disabled, and several mowers were stolen. On the night of the theft, local police stopped a suspicious white truck whose owner was a person of interest to Grundy County law enforcement.

On November 11th, 2011, Sheriff Myers, the NICB, and the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division jointly executed a search warrant of the truck owner's property. During the search, law enforcement found the Kubota mowers as well as several other stolen John Deere agricultural machines. The Sheriff's confidential informant also divulged locations of additional stolen equipment.

The types of equipment recovered included: John Deere Gators and mowers, Bobcat skid steer loaders, Caterpillar excavators, Ford backhoes, a Dressta paving machine, and trailers. The total value of the recovered items ranges between \$750,000

and \$1,000,000. Three suspects have been arrested in connection with these thefts, while several persons of interest are still at large.

If you think that you may be a victim or may have purchased a piece of stolen equipment connected to this theft ring, Special Agent Ball suggests that you "go immediately to the local law enforcement and explain (that) you have the equipment and are willing to assist on their recovery."



*Special thanks goes to Jimmy Carl Ball, Sr. (NICB); Sheriff Brent Myers (Grundy County Sheriff's Office); Scott Dickson, Troy Human, Matthew Minter, Stacy Williams of the Tennessee Highway Patrol Criminal Investigation Division; and Detective Hal Nash of the DeKalb County Alabama for their assistance in providing information for this report.*



### FBI-LEEDA Heavy-Equipment Theft Summit

*Sponsored by: Sedgwick County Sheriff Office*

**Date:** February 21, 2012

**Location:**  
Sedgwick County Extension Office  
7001 West 21st Street North  
Wichita, KS 67205

## NER On The Road



### American Rental Association THE RENTAL SHOW

New Orleans  
February 5 – 8, 2012  
Booth # 8129  
[www.therentalshow.com](http://www.therentalshow.com)

### 2012 National LICA Winter Convention

San Diego, California  
February 7 – 12, 2012  
Thursday February 9th, 9:15 a.m.  
Stacy Kaufman – NER  
and Jason Oswald – CNA Insurance  
Fleet Safety and Security  
[www.licanational.org/San\\_Diego.htm](http://www.licanational.org/San_Diego.htm)



**World of Concrete**  
Las Vegas  
Convention Center  
January 24 – 27, 2012  
Booth # C6388  
[www.worldofconcrete.com](http://www.worldofconcrete.com)

## Contact NER

**Equipment owners:**  
1-866-346-3746 x212  
[skaufman@ner.net](mailto:skaufman@ner.net)

**Insurance professionals:**  
1-866-346-3746 x205  
[msthill@ner.net](mailto:msthill@ner.net)

**Law enforcement:**  
1-866-346-3746, Option 1  
[info@ner.net](mailto:info@ner.net)



[www.StopEquipmentTheft.com](http://www.StopEquipmentTheft.com)



[www.IRONcheck.com](http://www.IRONcheck.com)



[www.IRONwatch.com](http://www.IRONwatch.com)

Report a theft: [www.ner.net](http://www.ner.net)  
or fax to 201-469-2027

Sign up for theft alerts:  
[dmossmann@ner.net](mailto:dmossmann@ner.net)

All other inquires:  
National Equipment Register  
545 Washington Blvd., 22-19  
Jersey City, NJ 07310-1686  
Phone: 1-866-663-7872  
Fax: 201-469-2027  
E-mail: [info@ner.net](mailto:info@ner.net) ■ Web: [www.ner.net](http://www.ner.net)