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PSE says copper thefts down 28 percent

Monday November 26, 1:06 pm ET

Puget Sound Energy said that due to new laws and heightened security measures, it's reduced theft of copper at its substations by 28 percent in the past year.

The Bellevue-based subsidiary of Puget Energy Inc. (NYSE: [PSD - News](#)) said it's replaced fencing around its substations with a material that can't be cut and **it's tagged some of its copper with microscopic labels that can be traced by recycling centers and police.** A new law that makes recyclers keep more detailed records on copper sales also helped, the utility said.

The soaring price of copper -- from 80 cents per pound in 2003 to around \$3.50 this year -- has spurred the thefts, which have cost PSE about \$500,000 since 2005. The new rules and procedures have reduced theft by 28 percent in the nine-county Puget Sound area from 2006 to 2007, although in King County, copper theft has increased by 35 percent in the past year.

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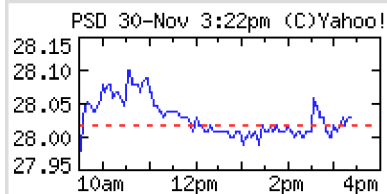
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