



POWER CUTS AND WIDESPREAD CALIFORNIA POWER OUTAGES POSE BURGLARY THREATS TO JEWELRY STORES

There have been three significant burglaries of jewelry stores in the past week in the Midwest and in California, two of which involved interrupting the power to the jewelry store in order to disable the alarms and the surveillance video:

New Albany, IN (near Louisville, KY), 10/02/18; power cut, safe compromised.

Gurnee, IL (Chicago, area), 10/04/19, 10:08 p.m., vault compromised.

Los Angeles, CA area, 10/07/19, power cut off, safe compromised.

In addition, Pacific Gas and Electric is shutting down electric power to a vast area of California for at least several days to prevent wildfires. Jewelers both in California and elsewhere need to be on high alert for the threat of burglary. Recommendations are included below regarding steps you can take for both of these risks.

REGARDING CALIFORNIA POWER OUTAGE:

1. Request your local police to make extra runs and give extra attention to your jewelry store when the store is closed.
2. Put all merchandise away in your safe.
3. If your insurance permits it, consider placing high value items in a bank safe deposit box during this emergency.
4. Hire an armed guard for when your store is closed.
5. Without endangering your personal safety, make visits to your jewelry store at various times when the store is closed.

REGARDING POWER CUT BURGLARIES:

METHODS USED:

1. Jewelry stores targeted on weekends, or nights before the day the store is closed. Holidays are also high risk times.
2. Burglars access the outside electrical panel and cut off power to the store, disabling alarms and camera systems.
3. Burglars wait to see police or other response time, and then wait until police depart.
4. Burglars wait until back up battery is exhausted.
5. Suspects are Chilean burglary crews reportedly based in California and Florida, but who travel throughout the U.S.
6. Suspects may cut through the roof, or break into the jewelry store from a neighboring business, but also may break open or pry open front or rear doors.
7. Suspects may cut power to numerous jewelry stores in the same area and wait to observe response time and then identify best target store.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Jewelers must respond to all cases of power interruptions at their stores.**
2. Make sure that your call list at the alarm company includes the owner and enough employees who will be available to respond, including during vacations, weekend and holiday nights, and at all other times.
3. Jewelers should not respond alone and need police to accompany them.
4. Police should be alerted that there may be burglars near the store watching to see the response to the power line cut.
5. Jewelers should inspect their electrical box on a regular basis and report to police and JSA any sign of tampering with it even if the power is not cut off and no burglary occurred. This gang scouts locations and when presented with numerous electrical boxes outside a building, will flick switches on and off to determine the correct box for the jewelry store.
6. Fire Regulations vary in different jurisdictions regarding placing secure locks on an outside electrical box. If you wish guidance, contact your local fire department.
7. In order to determine if your electrical box has been tampered with, secure it closed with a colored zip tie. The burglary suspects have been known to place their own locks back on the electrical box after they have removed the existing lock and disconnected the power. If you use a colored zip tie, not one colored white, it is unlikely the suspects will have such a zip tie if they cut it, and you can tell if your box has been tampered with.
8. You must have alarm protection for your store that covers all possible means of entry, including the roof and sidewalls.
9. You must have line security to protect you if your alarm system is disabled.
10. The interior and exterior of the premises must be checked, including the roof and all possible means of entry.