Network Rail has extended its use of SmartWater on the London to North West (LNW) mainline for a further five years.

This follows impressive results which saw delay minutes to train services reduced by 54.9%, helping to improve commuter confidence.

The collaboration between the two companies, together with British Transport Police, has brought added traceability to Network Rail’s cable infrastructure and heightened the accountability of thieves. The use of SmartWater on the LNW line helped Network Rail to reduce incidents of cable theft by 54.7% over a three-year period. Network Rail will continue to work closely with SmartWater on community awareness programmes, covert operations and scrap metal dealer visits.

Phil Cleary, CEO of SmartWater, said: “We are delighted to be continuing our partnership with Network Rail. Helping the rail industry to innovate its approach to crime reduction has widespread impact, going beyond cable theft to having a positive impact on trespassing and vandalism. Collectively, this makes the railway safer for passengers, employees and the wider public.”

Highways England has launched an innovative security operation to deter thieves from stealing electricity cable that powers roadside messaging systems, lighting and CCTV.

SmartWater is protecting cable along a 17 mile stretch of motorway between junction 8 of the M60 near Sale and junction 20 of the M62 near Rochdale, as part of the Smart Motorway scheme in Greater Manchester. Highways England, Greater Manchester Police and SmartWater investigators are also working with scrap dealers to help them avoid buying stolen goods. To target persistent offenders, covert operations are also being planned and executed in hotspots areas, which have so far resulted in 6 arrests.

Paul Hampson, Project Manager at Highways England, said: “We’re investing millions of pounds of taxpayers’ money on the smart motorway scheme in Greater Manchester so it makes sense for us to do all we can to protect that investment. We’re covering the cables and equipment being installed as part of the project with SmartWater and warning thieves to stay away from the motorway.”

Pictured: Sir Ian McKellen is encouraging Londoners to mark their property with SmartWater

70,000 homes in London have now signed up to a pioneering anti-burglary project being rolled out by the Metropolitan Police in partnership with SmartWater.

‘MetTrace’ is a three year project that will see 440,000 homes within the capital receive SmartWater to protect their personal possessions. 31 of London’s 32 boroughs have now started to rollout the technology. It has been predicted that the project could prevent over 7,000 burglaries.

Lord of the Rings and X-Men star Sir Ian McKellen recently voiced his support for the project and encouraged Londoners to mark their property. Making reference to his recent role as Sherlock Holmes in the film Mr Holmes, Sir Ian said: “Help the police. Help yourself. Thwart the burglar. Use SmartWater. Elementary.”

Pictured: Network Rail will continue using SmartWater for a further 5 years

Pictured: SmartWater is protecting cable that powers motorway messaging systems

NetTrace
Protecting London’s Homes

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Gang jailed for railway cable thefts 3
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BURGLARIES SLASHED BY 75% IN CHELTENHAM

Burglary rates have been slashed by three quarters in an area of Cheltenham following the distribution of SmartWater packs to residents. Almost 1,000 packs were made available to people living in the St Paul’s region of the town, which has a high percentage of student houses.

Prior to the introduction of SmartWater, a total of 55 burglaries were reported across the area during a 12 month period, but the subsequent nine months have seen just 12 incidents reported to police.

CHURCH LEAD THIEF SENTENCED

A thief who stole roofing lead in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, has been sentenced after he was caught attempting to sell SmartWater-marked lead at a scrap yard.

Damon Whitcombe (32) pleaded guilty to stealing lead from St Michaels and All Angels Church in Hatfield. He asked for three further thefts, including an earlier raid on the same church, to also be taken into consideration.

Hertfordshire Police carry out regular checks at scrap yards and it was during a visit to a local dealer that officers noticed Mr Whitcombe was selling on large amounts of lead. When examined some of the lead was found to be marked with SmartWater which was analysed and identified as having come from St Michaels and All Angels Church.

Whitcombe was given a 12 month community order (Rehabilitation Activity Requirement), with an 8 week curfew. He was also ordered to pay compensation totalling £325 and pay £180 court charges. Detective Constable William Harvey from Hertfordshire Police said: “Whitcombe stole hundreds of pounds worth of lead from these properties. But unfortunately for him, there was a trail of evidence leading us to him and it was only a matter of time before we caught up with him.”

TRAPS SET FOR CITY BIKE THIEVES

City of London Police are using SmartWater in sting operations to help officers catch persistent bike thieves. Last year, on average 38 bikes were stolen every month in the city of London, which covers an area of just 1.12 square miles.

To help curb this alarming rise in thefts, police are now placing ‘trap bikes’ around the city to snare unsuspecting thieves. Each bike is marked with a transferable form of SmartWater which will tag the skin and clothing of the thief and directly link them with the stolen bike.

Temporary Superintendent Helen Isaac from City of London Police said, “The use of ‘trap bikes’ has been very successful in other force areas in helping the police catch and prosecute offenders. We hope this method will help decrease the number of pedal cycles stolen in the City of London. Signs warning of the use of SmartWater and ‘trap bikes’ will be placed in hotspot areas giving a clear message to thieves to stay clear, otherwise they will end up being arrested.”

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GANG JAILED FOR RAILWAY CABLE THEFTS

A gang of men who stole more than £300,000 worth of cable from the railway network in West Yorkshire have been jailed after admitting cable theft and handling stolen goods.

The men committed five separate cable thefts between June and September 2014. Following their initial arrest they continued to offend whilst out on police bail. Outstanding detective work by British Transport Police (BTP) officers ultimately resulted in the conviction of the men. This was aided by a covert operation planned and executed with the assistance of SmartWater investigators.

Following the covert operation BTP officers re-arrested the gang, two of which had SmartWater on their clothing and tools, which had been applied to nearby railway cable. Cornel Balaiu (38) was jailed for 16 months, Adrian Pongori (33) for 27 months, Gheorghe Pongori (28) for two years and Albu Paulo Lazar (25) was given an 18-month sentence suspended for 18 months.

An application has also been submitted for all four men to be deported once their sentences have been served. A fifth man, Ioan Marin Lapusan (23), received an 18-month community order, curfew tagging for 12 weeks between 9pm and 6am and must complete 150 hours of community work.

Detective Inspector Glen Alderson of British Transport Police said: “Strong forensic analysis, including fingerprints from a number of items, tied all these men to the offences. This, coupled with clear evidence as a result of undercover surveillance and a thorough and detailed investigation, left the group with no option but to plead guilty to this string of offences.”

FRENCH TOWN SEEKS REDUCTION IN BURGLARY

The French town of la Madeleine, located near Lille, is offering residents the chance to protect their property with SmartWater in an effort to reduce burglary levels. The town, which is home to around 23,000 residents, currently experiences approximately 70 burglaries per year. The local council is seeking to reduce this by at least 25% and so has opted to introduce SmartWater.

The program was voted-in by the town council following a proposal that was put forward by the local Mayor, Sébastien Lempré. Mr Lempré said: “This is one more link in our security chain. We already have video surveillance, an armed municipal police forces and vigilant citizens and now we are pleased to be introducing forensic marking technology.”

To demonstrate their commitment to the project, the local council has already marked all of its own property with SmartWater in a bid to deter local thieves.

ENTIRE TOWN TO RECEIVE SMARTWATER

A market town in south east Shropshire will become the first in the country to be totally protected with SmartWater as part of a new West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police initiative called ‘We Don’t Buy Crime’.

Every household in Cleobury Mortimer is being visited and offered the chance to security mark their property with SmartWater at no cost. The initiative is being funded by Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council, South Shropshire Housing Group and the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner. It is also part of West Mercia Police’s strategy of tackling rural crime.

Detective Chief Inspector Tom Harding from West Mercia Police said: “We owe it to the community we serve to constantly strive to improve and look to work in smarter ways as a police force. Having a company with the know-how and track record of SmartWater on our doorstep, it made perfect sense to look at how we could work with them to benefit our communities.”

West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, Bill Longmore, said: “This initiative fuses modern technology, in SmartWater, with old fashioned community spirit, with the aim of achieving something that will make Cleobury Mortimer safer and stronger. I’m aware a lot of good work has already been done to help ensure the whole town is part of the scheme, and I’m very grateful to all those involved.”

CHARITY PROTECTS LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT

Sussex Search and Rescue is protecting vital and potentially life-saving equipment with SmartWater in order to deter would-be thieves. The registered charity, which is staffed entirely by volunteers, conducts searches for high-risk vulnerable missing persons across the county of Sussex, covering an area of 769 square miles.

All searches are co-ordinated from the charity’s Incident Control Vehicles which are fitted with an array of technical and communications equipment, first aid equipment and mountain bikes for use in particularly remote locations. During search and rescue operations, time can be of critical importance so it is essential that all resources remain available for use at a moment’s notice. Sussex Search and Rescue is therefore taking the proactive measure of marking all of its equipment with SmartWater.

Danny Wood, Equipment Officer for Sussex Search and Rescue, said: “The loss of equipment that we use on a daily basis to save lives could be catastrophic. The fact that our resources are protected by SmartWater gives our volunteers extra peace of mind that they will be able to continue their vital work.”

STOP PRESS

USA department store chain SteinMart has introduced SmartWater at eight stores across three US states to protect high-value goods. SteinMart has over 260 stores nationwide.
A man has been jailed for five years for his part in a series of cashbox robberies. Leon Friedmann (28) pleaded guilty to robbery and conspiracy at Wolverhampton Crown Court after being arrested in possession of SmartWater-marked gloves that linked him to multiple crimes.

The Court heard that two masked men stole a cashbox after threatening security guards with iron bars near to an ATM machine in Wolverhampton, before fleeing the scene in a stolen orange Ford Focus. Later that day the same distinctive Ford Focus was reported to police after its occupants, which included Friedmann, were seen acting suspiciously outside a Waitrose supermarket, where a security van was delivering cash.

Friedmann, who was arrested following a brief police pursuit, was already wanted by police on suspicion of involvement in a series of cashbox robberies. Analysis of the SmartWater-marked gloves and an angle-grinder found in his possession linked him with two previous cashbox thefts.

Detective Constable Justin Le Fort, from West Midlands Police, said: “The sentence reflects the serious nature of these offences and the danger that members of the public were placed in by Friedmann and his associates. Justice has been served by a combined effort of public vigilance and police investigation.”

STOP PRESS
SmartWater has launched a new partnership with NFU Scotland to provide members with a 30% discount on SmartWater’s Farm Facilities Packs.

SMARTWATER IS ‘PERFECT FIT’ FOR SHERIFF’S OFFICE
The Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office (PBSO) in Florida has started introducing SmartWater into three communities in order to tackle rising levels of domestic burglary. Over 100 SmartWater packs have already been given out to residents, with the initial proposed rollout expected to reach over 200 homes.

PBSO is also undertaking a major criminal awareness programme that will see everyone arrested checked for SmartWater. Information about SmartWater will also be streamed on televisions throughout two prison facilities that collectively house more than 2,600 inmates, along with signage placed at all exit and entry points and within all jail cells.

Palm Beach County Sheriff, Ric Bradshaw, said: “We have been watching SmartWater decrease theft since it was first launched in the United States. The use of the latest technology is important for us if we are to reduce crime in Palm Beach County. I am committed to providing this agency with the tools and resources to make it one of the most modern, advanced and effective agencies in the country. The use of SmartWater technology is a perfect fit.”

CASHBOX THIEF SENT TO PRISON FOR 5 YEARS
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THE CRIME FIGHTING COMPANY
Our philosophy is simple – the more criminals we help to convict, the more SmartWater acts as a powerful deterrent. We offer a range of cutting-edge forensic security services and forensic liquid products to both detect and deter criminal activity.

If you require our assistance please contact us on 0800 521 669 or email enquiry@smartwater.com
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