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EMPLOYEE AT ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND PLEADS GUILTY IN THEFT OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

Stole Tons of Copper Wire from APG Buildings and Locations,
Including Live Wire from Electrical Boxes in a Building's Walls and Ceilings

Baltimore, Maryland - Timothy J. Bittner, age 52, of Bel Air, Maryland pleaded guilty today to his role in the theft of copper wire from Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG).

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge Robert Craig of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service - Mid-Atlantic Field Office; the Directorate of Emergency Services, U.S. Army Garrison, Aberdeen Proving Ground; and Special Agent in Charge Richard A. McFeely of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to his plea agreement, Bittner worked as an electrician at APG's Department of Public Works. From March through November 2011, Bittner and his conspirators used their expertise as electricians to steal copper wire from government buildings and locations in the Edgewood area of APG for resale to metal recyclers for their personal gain.

Bittner falsely reported his work time to disguise the fact that he was stealing copper wire while on duty. Bittner and his conspirators took the stolen copper wire to their government vehicles in the APG parking lot, and transferred the wire to their personal cars. They moved the stolen wire to their residences where they stripped the plastic coating off the wire by hand, which increased its market value. Bittner and his conspirators sold the copper to metal recyclers.

In June 2011, Bittner and his conspirators realized that a significant amount of copper wire was located in the ground under Eagle Point. For two days and while on duty, Bittner and his conspirators tied the exposed portion of the wire to their government vehicles, which they used to pull the wire out of the ground. Because the stolen wire weighed approximately five tons, Bittner and a coconspirator rented storage space in Edgewood to store the stolen wire, and bought a stripping machine to remove the insulation from the copper wire at a much faster pace than by hand. Bittner and his conspirators sold the copper to metal recyclers in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware as scrap, and divided the proceeds which totaled over \$48,000.

Finally, Bittner and a conspirator removed live copper wire from electrical junction boxes in the walls and ceiling of a government building. They also stole wire from another building as well as from three generators near Eagle Point. They sold this additional stolen wire for over \$30,000. The cost to the U.S. Army to purchase new copper wire to re-fit the two government buildings is \$33,711, including labor.

As part of his plea agreement, Bittner has agreed to forfeit \$87,038, the amount of money he and his conspirators received from the sale of the stolen wire, and pay \$33,711 in restitution.

Bittner faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison for conspiracy to steal government. U.S. District Judge William D. Quarles, Jr. scheduled sentencing for October 30, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the DCIS, APG's Directorate of Emergency Services and FBI for their work in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S.

Attorney Joyce K. McDonald, Special Assistant United States Attorney David I. Sharfstein, of the U.S. Department of Justice Tax Division, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean Marlaire, who are prosecuting the case.