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Press Release

October 31, 2014

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

Hicksville, L.I. Man Charged with Stealing Copper from the Long Island Rail Road Right-of-Way on 8 Separate Occasions in October

MTA Police Detectives Nab Their Suspect At His Court Date for Earlier Theft

MTA Police Chief Michael Coan today announced the arrest of a Hicksville, L.I. man who confessed to stealing copper cable along the Long Island Rail Road right-of-way on eight occasions this month, including an incident on Thursday that caused widespread delays on the Huntington/Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma Branches.

Bernard Jenkins, 58, of 7 Straight Lane, Hicksville, was arrested this morning by MTA Police who questioned him when he showed up for a court appearance in Mineola in connection with an earlier arrest, unrelated to today's charges, for the same crime.

Chief Coan said that Jenkins was rearrested by MTA Police Detectives Patrick Inzinna and Richard Lagnese after he admitted to his involvement in the theft of copper cable in the latest incidents along LIRR's Main Line in Nassau County between October 16 and October 30.

The Nassau County District Attorney's Office said that Jenkins was being held for arraignment in the same court on new charges - six counts of grand larceny and two counts of petit larceny.

MTA Police said the latest thefts began on October 16 at School St. in Westbury and was followed by two incidents on October 17 at the LIRR's Carle Place substation and at Roslyn Road in Mineola. The thief struck again at Roslyn Road on October 24 and October 27 and was back at the Carle Place substation that same day. The last two incidents occurred Thursday, October 30 at the Carle Place substation and at Willis Ave. in Mineola.

Detective said most of vandalism committed by Jenkins had no immediate impact on train service and was discovered by LIRR during regular inspections indicating that he knew how to remove the copper and get away safely. However, the thefts on October 30 – involving a total of 300 feet of cable - were apparently discovered quickly because the incident at Willis Ave. caused a small track fire that damaged some rail. Trains were able to travel through the area during the AM Peak period but only at reduced speeds and many westbound Huntington/Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma trains were delayed.

MTA Police have made arrests in the past for the thefts of copper along the LIRR right-of-way, a risky crime given the high-voltage dangers. Both the MTA Police and LIRR have stepped up surveillance and security over the last year with some success. So far this year, MTA Police said there have been a total of 27 incidents of copper theft on the LIRR compared with 56 for the same period in 2013. The police made 13 arrests last year and have made 11 so far in 2014.