

# Warning issued after fuel thefts

**Police have urged people with domestic oil supplies to step up security after a spate of thefts in Cornwall.**

The warning was issued after thieves struck at a number of farms and rural properties in Camelford and Torpoint.

The thefts have involved both domestic heating oil and red diesel from properties and farms.

"Owners are urged to check tanks and review security by locking tanks if possible," a spokesman for Devon and Cornwall Police said.

In the most recent incident, about 800 litres of heating oil was stolen from a property in the Torpoint area of east Cornwall.

## **Dip samples**

Police believe it is likely thieves are stealing the fuel to sell on and using the rising fuel prices to make more money illegally.

Red diesel is taxed at a lower rate than normal diesel and is only for use in agricultural vehicles. It is marked with a red dye to make it more identifiable.

Anyone buying suspect fuel would be committing a crime.

"You would be receiving stolen property and you will be prosecuted," the police spokesman told BBC News.

He said that drivers attempting to use red diesel in their vehicles could be subject to roadside dip samples, either by police or Customs and Excise officers.

Ian Johnson from the National Farmers Union said he was not surprised at the thefts given the current price of the products.

"We must always be vigilant about the possibility of theft - the last thing farmers want is to have their fuel pinched," he said.

Some filling stations in Devon and Cornwall are charging almost £1.30 for a litre of diesel.

Police issued the warning on the same day two major oil companies announced their profits for the first three months of the year.

Shell made £3.9bn, while BP announced profits of £3.3bn.

The Automobile Association has said the profits would shock people who were struggling to cope with rising fuel prices.



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Red diesel is taxed at a lower rate for agricultural vehicles

## Police warn of heating oil thefts

**Police in the Forest of Dean have urged owners of fuel tanks to protect themselves against heating oil theft, following a rise in reported incidents.**

Oil thieves have targeted residential and business properties in the area.

A residential property in Upper Redbrook has been targeted twice, with approximately 500 litres (110 gallons) of heating oil stolen.

Crime Reduction Officer Paul Francis said the increase of heating oil prices had increased oil theft crime.

Mr Francis said: "Most of the criminals are using vans with large tanks inside. Emptying a full tank can take a considerable amount of time, which is why some offenders take a little and then return at a later date."

Police have advised fuel tank owners to make their fuel tanks as secure as possible, adding security lighting and locking the filler cap.

Owners and neighbours are urged to report any suspicious behaviour.



Police have advised fuel tank owners to secure their tanks against theft

# Police warn of heating oil thefts

There have been 59 heating oil thefts in the Dyfed-Powys area this year

## **Police in rural areas are warning of a big increase in heating oil thefts from domestic storage tanks.**

Officers say with the rise in energy costs thieves are targeting homes "on an almost industrial scale".

Last year, 17 such thefts were reported in the Dyfed-Powys area but the force has already had 59 incidents this year.

Dilys Jones, 82, from Laugharne, Carmarthenshire, was one of those affected and had nearly £400 worth of fuel stolen from her tank.

Police said they were used to tackling diesel thefts from farms and rural businesses but the rise in heating oil theft from domestic residences on such a scale was new.

Mrs Jones said: "It has cost me £329 which I've got to pay extra.

"I'm 82-years-old, I'm diabetic, disabled, it's very upsetting.

"I know of two others in the area.

"I just have not got the money to pay for it.

"I have cried over it because I was left thinking how am I going to live?"

Brian Walters of the Farmers' Union of Wales said:

"We've had reports to us that there have been losses [of diesel and domestic heating oil] in the last few weeks.

"It's a worrying trend because the price of diesel and oil has gone up so much in the last few months."

Pembrokeshire crime prevention officer Max Bevan

said: "Officers are carrying increased stop checks of vans moving about at night and we have found people who are stealing on an almost industrial scale.

"But we would urge the public if you see anything suspicious ring it in there and then."



**“ I have cried over it because I was left thinking how am I going to live ”**

Dilys Jones