

# Fuel thieves foiled

VICTORIAN company Fuel Protection Technologies has received a boost for its FuelGuard anti-theft system with the decision by major heavy equipment hirer EA Hire to install FuelGuard across its fleet.

EA Hire managing director Laurence Eales said fuel theft was a big problem for the company, especially for equipment on hire in remote and rural areas.

"The machines are left out in the open, and the way fuel prices are at the moment, I suppose some people out there are looking at a dishonest opportunity," he said. "It's a big problem – there's not only the cost of replacing the fuel but also the downtime component while we're waiting for the truck to come and refuel, as well as the loss of productivity for our client while he's waiting for the machine to come back on line."

Eales said his company had tried using heavy steel locking covers on fuel filler necks but the thieves had simply cut them off. Three months ago, he decided to trial FuelGuard on nine machines working at the Brooklyn to Lara gas pipeline project, which runs through farmland west of Melbourne.

"Before installing FuelGuard we were hit twice – each time it was probably a minimum cost of \$3000 for fuel alone," he said.

Eales said that since installing FuelGuard there had been no thefts from EA Hire machines working on the pipeline project, although some other contractors' equipment had been targeted.

"There were some machines on the site that didn't have the FuelGuard fitted and they got siphoned, whereas our machines were left alone," he said.

"That was the trial run and now we are looking at installing it in our fleet in the other regional areas."

Eales said EA Hire was considering the purchase of one of FPT's custom-designed hydraulic-drive installers.

"With the number of machines we've got, and the constant upgrading of fleet, we're looking at doing our own installs," he said. "That would give us more control and minimise the downtime of the installation."

The heart of the FuelGuard system is an ingeniously designed spring and baffle assembly that is inserted into the fuel filler neck and resists damage or removal attempts. FPT says the spring is designed to resist attempts to damage or remove it so that once installed, FuelGuard is near impossible to remove.

The company says the device makes siphoning fuel from the tank impossible while still allowing fast refuelling. As an added deterrent to thieves, a reflective warning sticker is placed next to the fuel filler neck. **PH**



FuelGuard has stopped fuel theft from EA Hire's equipment at the Brooklyn-Lara gas pipeline project.

## Safer mini aimed at hire

DINGO Australia says its new IT Loader has been designed with the hire industry in mind.

The new mini loader has a number of fresh safety features, but according to Dingo it still has all the qualities which made the machine so remarkable and innovative in the first place.

Fourteen of the new loaders were bought by Kennards Hire for use in branches throughout Queensland.

Kennards Queensland southern area manager Steve Milligan said safety was a huge factor in the hire industry.

"With the new technologies that have been installed on the IT Loader we can be assured that our customers are safe and we are addressing a serious need in the market," he said.

Dingo says the IT Loader's hydraulically operated level lift makes the machine easier and safer to work with, and is ideal for first time users. Compared to mechanical levelling systems the hydraulic level lift has fewer wear points (thus less maintenance is required) and fewer crush points, and these factors improve the machine's safety.

Another safety feature on the new mini-loader is the "Cyclops Safety System" auxiliary shutoff, which senses when the operator is not directly working the controls of the machine and automatically shuts down the auxiliary system.

The IT Loader is available with an updated poly track system designed to prevent build up and obstructions.