



American Rental Association
1900 19th Street
Moline, IL 61265



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Public Relations Contacts:

ARA

Jennifer Vrban, jennifer.vrban@ararental.org
(800) 334-2177, Ext. 270; (309) 764-2475, Ext. 270

NER

Glen Sider, gsider@nerusa.com
(212) 297 1805

Two California Law Enforcement Officers Honored for Work Combating Heavy Equipment Theft Special Award Presented at *The Rental Show*

Feb. 6, 2006 (ORLANDO, FLA.) Two California law enforcement officers were honored earlier today for their efforts in combating heavy equipment theft in the rental equipment industry. The award – the ARA Insurance Services/National Equipment Register (AIS/NER) Award, presented at ***The Rental Show***, the annual convention and trade show of the American Rental Association – went to Detective Lou Koven of the Los Angeles Police Department and Investigator Gabe Marquez of the California Highway Patrol.

The AIS/NER award recognizes a law enforcement officer or agent who has performed exceptional services to the rental industry through the recovery of rental equipment or through theft prevention initiatives.

“These two law enforcement agents have performed exceptional service to our industry through the recovery of stolen rental equipment, prevention initiatives, and by increasing awareness of the magnitude of this issue,” said Phil Kelling, president of ARA Insurance Services.

“Heavy equipment theft is one of the rental equipment industry’s more complex challenges, costing the rental equipment industry hundreds of millions of dollars a year,” said David Shillingford, president of National Equipment Register. “In the ongoing battle with equipment theft, law enforcement officers make an often unrecognized contribution,” he added.

Koven and Marquez were responsible for the identification and recovery of numerous machines and worked extensively with local law enforcement, rental companies, ARA and NER to establish an equipment crime task force that has already had a dramatic effect on equipment theft levels.

ARA Insurance Services and ARA of California, a state association of ARA, granted \$1,000 to the Los Angeles Police Department and another \$1,000 to the California Highway Patrol to continue assisting rental owners with theft prevention.

The award was established in 2004 as part of the partnership among the American Rental Association (ARA), ARA Insurance Services (AIS) and the National Equipment Register (NER), a partnership central to ARA’s efforts to help their members combat the serious problem of equipment theft in the rental industry.

As a member benefit, ARA offers its members the opportunity, at no cost, to list 1,000 pieces of equipment on the National Equipment Register database. NER's database and its Police Hotline provide law enforcement with 24 hour access to equipment identification experts and data on equipment losses and ownership from equipment owners, insurance companies and manufacturers. This member benefit is endorsed by ARA Insurance Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ARA.

ARA, AIS and NER will further demonstrate their commitment to helping law enforcement combat equipment theft by hosting more than 40 law enforcement officers from Florida and surrounding states for specialized theft prevention training during **The Rental Show**. Officers will attend interactive classroom sessions and acquire hands-on examination of the equipment on exhibit by vendors at **The Rental Show**. Similar training is offered through ARA's state associations in partnership with NER.

About ARA

The American Rental Association (www.ARARental.org) is an international trade association for the owners of equipment rental businesses and the manufacturers and suppliers of rental equipment. Domestic annual rental industry revenue is approximately \$31.1 billion. ARA members, which include more than 7,500 rental businesses and 1,100 manufacturers and suppliers, are located in every U.S. state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, every Canadian province, and more than 30 countries worldwide. **The Rental Show**, ARA's annual convention and trade show, is the world's largest rental equipment trade show.

About NER

The National Equipment Register, Inc. (www.NERusa.com) was established in 2001 to increase the recovery rate of stolen farm and construction equipment by improving the volume, quality and availability of information available to law enforcement investigating suspicious equipment. NER has developed national databases of equipment ownership (13 million records) and theft (80,000 records) and provides this information and equipment identification advice to police 24 hours-a-day. Equipment owners register their equipment with NER to ensure that it can be identified quickly, even before a theft has been reported. Theft is also deterred by placing NER decals on registered equipment to warn thieves of the increased chance of detection and arrest. These processes and relationships have directly resulted in the recovery of over \$7 million of stolen equipment, much more if related recoveries are included.