

We can prosecute you now, agitators warned

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video works for one of its contractors, adding that protesters 'may be prosecuted'.

Security sources say the intention of recording the protesters is so that High Court injunctions can be sought if their behaviour is deemed criminal, obstructive or of an intimidating nature.

If an injunction is obtained, then some of the main agitators could be barred from being within the vicinity of water meter installations, security sources say.

However, it seems the hi-tech war is now being waged on both sides – as some protesters have, in turn, filmed the security men who have clip-on cameras on their helmets.

In one video obtained by this newspaper, a contractor in Swords, north Co. Dublin, assisting the water meter installers in July tells assembled protesters: 'I want to make you aware you are in breach and you are being video-recorded at this moment of time and you are being video-recorded being told – and in some point in the future we may take you to court, it is an offence [against] section 12 [of the] Water Services Act.'

The worker continued: 'But video evidence can be used at any time. I just want you to be aware of that.'

'I'm not threatening you'

'We now have video evidence of you breaching these rules...I'm not threatening you but I reserve the right to prosecute, and this is a promise is what I'm making (sic).'

Irish Water confirmed to the Mail last night that a contractor hired by them was recording some of the protesters. The semi-State company said in a statement that under section 12 of the 2007 Water Services Act, it is an offence for anyone to obstruct or interfere with a water services authority.

The statement added that under the same Act, 'a water services authority may take all necessary measures to ensure compliance with its obligations, including the installation and maintenance of meters. By virtue of the WSA (No 2) 2013, Irish Water now has these powers and functions.'

'Therefore, advising protesters that they may be prosecuted for preventing Irish Water from carrying out its duties under the Water Services Act is stating a fact.'

'We understand that the person you refer to in the video is one of our contractor's HSQE (Health Safety Quality and the Environment) staff.

Head cam: Video grab of alleged security man at protest, with a camera mounted on his hard hat



Anti-charges: A protester confronts Irish Water meter installers in Swords



Evidence: A worker shows protester his identity at demonstration in Swords

'We further understand that no staff (or other company) have been employed by contractors to provide security at meter installation sites.'

A well-placed source said recording of protesters has begun because of the 'level of intimidation and violence' workers are facing as they try and install water meters.

In response, protesters claim they feel intimidated. Protesters in the Raheny area in north Dublin last night said they have witnessed these contractors with recording devices on their hard hats first-hand.

Paul and Stephen, who declined to provide their second names for fear of prosecution, are residents in the area. They said protesters have been

recorded by men wearing black combat trousers with black boots and Irish Water high-vis vests.

Paul explained to the Mail that local residents notify one another when Irish Water vans appear in the locality. 'They tell us where they are and if people are telling us – normally on social media – that they need help and we can get out of work, then we'll do our best.'

Paul, who like Stephen works in the construction industry in the locality, says that the protests started in Raheny. 'It started in Wartermill Drive around five months ago, and we knew it was coming to our estates so rather than sit back and let Irish Water build around us,

we said we'd get out and help the estates around us. We didn't want Irish Water basically surrounding us and then coming into our estate.'

The two men said they were involved in a controversial video recording which spread online last week. The video – taken in Edmore, Raheny – shows locals tearing barriers away from contractors employed by Irish Water. 'We don't want water meters in this area,' the woman recording the video can be heard saying at the protest.

However, Stephen claimed the video had been edited to cut out the treatment staff had given a young woman. 'The last couple of times they've come in with about 25 to 30

lads in three or four vans, and out of them there can be up to ten of them that we think are security,' he added. 'They're wearing head cams as we can show you in video footage.'

He also claimed that water meter installers also used personal phones to record them.

Paul added that in another protest incident, one of the contractors allegedly identified himself to residents as being ex-Army. 'He told us he was ex-Army and he said he was health and safety,' he said. 'They're not getting any work done...they're just following the foreman around, recording and pushing the barriers.'

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Obama wins support for action on Islamists

US lawmakers have pledged support for President Barack Obama's plan to expand the military fight against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

But fears of an open-ended conflict and questions about how to pay for it could complicate any vote on the effort.

Mr Obama sent a panel of top officials to the Capitol in Washington DC to make the case to the US Congress for broadening operations against the group, including airstrikes in Syria for the first time and more military advisers in Iraq.

In a televised address on Wednesday night, the Democratic president declared he would lead an alliance to root out the Islamic State.

Mail Foreign Service

Administration officials argue that Obama does not need formal authorisation from Congress for strikes against the militants, but they want legislators' support to show a united front – both against opponents and to other nations.

John Boehner, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, said Mr Obama had made a 'compelling case for action'.

However, he added that many Republicans have doubts about whether Mr Obama's plan can accomplish his mission of destroying the fanatical group, which has killed thousands of people in recent months.



'Compelling case': Obama

Man held in murder probe is on bail for serious offence

ONE of two men arrested in connection with the murder of Christopher Zambra four months ago is out on bail for a serious offence.

Mr Zambra, 39, was shot dead on Cooley Road in Drimnagh on May 4.

Two men, in their 40s and 20s, were arrested yesterday morning in Dublin and are currently being held at Sundrive Road and Kevin Street Garda Stations.

They can be held for up to seven days. They are in custody under Section 50 of the 2007 Criminal Justice Act. Mr Zambra was ambushed on Cooley Road on the afternoon of May 4, when two vehicles blocked his car at the front and rear as he was driving

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Crime Correspondent

to visit a family member. A large number of bullets were fired at him while he was still in his Audi car and also as he tried to flee. He collapsed outside a house and died.

A Nissan Qashqai used in the attack was found on fire on nearby Bedmadian Road, with a handgun inside which is believed to have been the murder weapon.

Mr Zambra was well known to gardai and was cleared of murder last year, but he was still at the centre of garda probes into a number of deaths in the west Dublin area.