

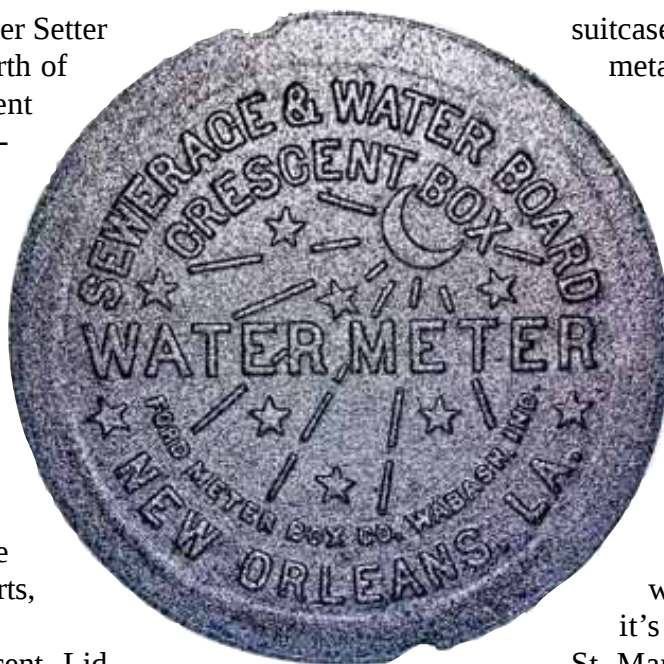
Crescent Box Lid Theft Plagues New Orleans

In April of 2002, The Meter Setter carried a story about the birth of the New Orleans Crescent Meter Box and the now-famous Crescent Lid. The unique design on the lid has made it the source of inspiration to scores of artists for many years. The design that graces the Crescent Lid was created by Edwin Ford in 1921, and has been in production ever since. In that time, artisans have replicated the design on t-shirts, jewelry, ceramics and glass.

Unfortunately, the Crescent Lid has also inspired others with less honorable intentions. The New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board has had to contend with the thefts of the lids. Not only has this been a financial burden, the open meter boxes have posed a safety hazard.

Recently, someone stole all the Crescent Box lids from a two-block stretch of Desire Street in New Orleans. A home owner reviewed his security camera video footage and saw three people casually removing the Crescent Lids as they strolled down the street.

Crescent Box Lids have appeared on online auction sites. Some of the lids are going for \$100 or more. The beautiful iron lids have captured the eye of visitors to New Orleans for nearly one hundred years. While most have been content to purchase items with the design on them, some have tried to take the lids, themselves, home with them. In a television interview, New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board Executive Director Marcia St. Martin said that airport authorities have turned over "...meter covers that have been in



suitcases, that didn't go through the metal detector."

It has become such a problem that New Orleans has resorted to replacing the stolen Crescent Lids with plain iron lids. These nondescript lids do the job, but they lack the special look and feel that has become a New Orleans icon. "We're replacing it with a very plain cover, so we're losing our history, we're losing our history and it's very disappointing," said St. Martin.

The Ford Meter Box Company has had a long business relationship with New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board. Even though the company gave full ownership of the crescent moon and stars design to New Orleans, we take extreme pride in the fact that it was created by Edwin Ford. It is gratifying that people are so taken with the design, but we do not condone the lids being taken.

New Orleans has history and charm unlike that of any other American city, and hundreds of thousands of people visit annually. There are many ways to take some of that charm home with them. The Crescent Lid motif has been reproduced on hundreds of different types of collectibles that can be found throughout New Orleans. But please, leave the Crescent Lids where they are.

The Ford Meter Box Company continues to provide the water industry with solutions. For innovation and assistance with your water works challenges, contact your local Ford distributor or The Ford Meter Box Company.

