

Theft of electricity and meter tampering are against South Carolina law and Broad River Electric Cooperative policy. The following laws are important and all Cooperative members should be aware of them.

### **16-13-380. Theft of Electric Current**

Any person who (a) has a contract, agreement, license, or permission with or from any person authorized to manufacture, sell, or use electricity for the purpose of light, heat, or power or with or from any authorized agent of the person for the use of electrical current belonging to or produced or furnished by the person and (b) willfully withdraws or causes to be withdrawn in any manner and appropriate for his own use or for the use of any other person the current from the wires of the person authorized to manufacture, sell, or use electricity is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction of a first offense, must be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or by imprisonment not exceeding thirty days. For a second or subsequent offense, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than ten thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than three years, or both. Any person who shall aid, abet, or assist the person in the withdrawing and appropriating of the current from the wires to or for the use of the other person or to or for the use of any other person is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be punished in like manner.

**Effective date: May 29, 1996**

### **16-13-385. Altering, tampering with or bypassing electric, gas, or water meters.**

(A) It is unlawful for an unauthorized person to alter, tamper with, or bypass a meter which has been installed for the purpose of measuring the use of electricity, gas, or water. A meter found in a condition which would cause electricity, gas, or water to be diverted from the recording apparatus of the meter or to cause the meter to inaccurately measure the use of electricity, gas, or water or the attachment to a meter or distribution wire of any device, mechanism, or wire which would permit the use of unmetered electricity, gas, or water or would cause a meter to inaccurately measure the use is *prima facie* evidence that the person in whose name the meter was installed or the person for whose benefit electricity, gas, or water was diverted caused the electricity, gas, or water to be diverted from going through the meter or the meter to inaccurately measure the use of the electricity, gas, or water. (B) A person who violates the provisions of this section for a first offense is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction must be fined not more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days. For a second or subsequent offense, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than ten thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

**Effective date: January 12, 1995**

Due to the seriousness of these laws, it would be to the advantage of each Co-op member to periodically check their meter and to make sure it has not been tampered with and to insure the seal has not been broken. If you discover that your meter has been tampered with or that the seal is broken, please call the Broad River Electric Cooperative office to report this as soon as possible.