

GLACIER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

POLICY MANUAL

POLICY NO. 510

ELECTRICAL POWER THEFT

I. OBJECTIVE

- a. To outline the policy and procedures relating to the prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of power theft. The specific objectives of the policy are to:
 1. Prevent customers from engaging in power theft.
 2. Detect customers who are stealing power.
 3. Recover revenues from customers caught stealing.
 4. Request criminal prosecution of customers.
 5. Pursue customers for the amount of loss and other appropriate charges through the civil courts when needed, and to take all reasonable action to collect the amount of loss plus costs and appropriate sanctions as provided for below associated therewith.
 6. Protect the general public from such unsafe activities as are involved tampering with and misappropriation of electric power.
- b. The primary objective of the policy is the detection of power theft and the recovery of revenues, and the investigation, deterrence of such activities and punishment of the crime of theft of electricity.
- c. The Cooperative, in pursuing these goals is also concerned about issues of public safety raised by such illegal and unsafe activities.

II. DEFINITIONS

- a. Person- An individual, firm, partnership, corporation, unincorporated association, or other legal or business entity or the executor, administrator, trustee, receiver, assignee, or personal representative thereof.
- b. Cooperative- The legal distributor of electric utility service in the defined service area.
- c. Meter- The device, including attachments, used to monitor the amount of electricity provided by the Cooperative and received by the customer.

- d. Theft of Electricity- Any knowing or purposeful unauthorized exertion of control over electricity, or attempt, by whatever means or scheme to accomplish such control over same.
- e. Bypassing- any act, using any means, the purpose of which is to obtain utility service without having such service pass through the authorized meter provided for measuring or registering such service.
- f. Tampering- Damaging, altering, adjusting, or in any manner interfering with or obstructing the operation or function of any authorized metering device for measuring or registering utility service.

III. POLICY

- a. The Cooperative recognized that the theft of utility services is:
 - 1. A crime punishable by law.
 - 2. A contributing factor to higher utility rates.
 - 3. A dangerous practice that can result in property damage and/or loss of life.
- b. The Cooperative is committed to combating this problem using every available means and to recovering lost revenues when a theft is detected.
- c. The Cooperative further acknowledges that offenders and others who blatantly engage in power theft should be referred to the Cooperative attorney for civil action and to the proper authorities for investigation and for appropriate criminal prosecution.
- d. Prevention- The Cooperative will take the necessary steps to insure that the integrity of the distribution system is maintained and that all meters are properly sealed or locked.
- e. Detection- Cooperative employees will be trained to detect possible cases of power theft while they are performing their normal duties.
 - 1. Indications of theft. If an employee witnesses an indication of a theft such as a broken seal, he will report the condition to his supervisor and resume his normal duties unless directed otherwise.
 - 2. Obvious theft. If the employee witnesses an obvious theft such as the meter inverted in the socket, he will notify the dispatcher or his supervisor and remain near the scene where he can observe the situation until the investigator

arrives. All contact with the customer at the location will be avoided.

3. Dangerous situation. If the obvious theft includes a dangerous situation such as an open meter face, use of jumpers, etc. the employee will notify the dispatcher or supervisor and return to the location of the meter until the investigator arrives. All other persons will be warned that a dangerous condition exists and they are not to approach the meter. If the customer attempts to approach the meter, the employee will explain that a dangerous situation exists but will not attempt to physically restrain the customer.
 4. Data processing. The billing department of the Cooperative will issue a monthly list of customers using one-third less electricity than for the same billing period the previous year.
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- f. Investigation- Investigations will be conducted by employees and, when appropriate, local law enforcement officials. All investigations will be conducted in a legal manner and the rights of the customer shall be respected at all times. Other departments and employees according to the needs of the investigation will support the investigator.
 - g. Prosecution- all cases of theft of electricity or power diversion shall be referred to the appropriate investigative and prosecutorial agencies for such action as they deem appropriate under the circumstances. All Cooperative personnel shall cooperate in any investigations and prosecutions initiated by those agencies. Referral of theft of electricity or power diversion cases for prosecution is solely for the purpose of prosecuting the crime involved and not for collection of the monetary loss to the Cooperative.
 - h. Penalty- A \$500 penalty will be collected from any member found to be tampering with a meter, diverting power, or theft of power.
 - i. Rewards- The General Manager may at his discretion pay a cash reward, to persons that report a confirmed case of meter tampering, power diversion, or theft of electric service.
 - j. Collection- The Cooperative shall take all reasonable steps, including if necessary and appropriate, the filing of a civil lawsuit, if warranted, to obtain reimbursement from the offending consumer for all loss of revenue and all costs associated therewith occasioned by the consumer's theft of electricity or power diversion. The total amount of these costs will be

charged to any existing account of the member responsible for the power theft. Such collection efforts shall be irrespective of the decision of any prosecutorial agency to criminally prosecute or not prosecute the offending consumer.

8-28-2003

DATE



SIGNATURE

Pres.

TITLE

SYSTEM INTEGRITY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

CUSTOMER ADDRESS: _____ DATE: _____

METER SERIAL NUMBER: _____ SEAL # _____

1. ___ Correct meter serial number.
2. ___ Correct seal serial number.
3. ___ Correct equipment for the voltage required at this location.
4. ___ Inspect service lines and entrance cables.
5. ___ Meter properly installed.
6. ___ Seal properly installed.
7. ___ Check disk rotation.
8. ___ Check glass cover for unusual holes or scratches.
9. ___ Seal or locking band correctly installed.
10. ___ Pull meter.
11. ___ Look for unusual markings on meter blades or terminal connections.
12. ___ Check potential test link.
13. ___ Internal seal correctly installed.
14. ___ General internal condition of meter.
15. ___ Check voltage and amperage on circuit.
16. ___ Replace and reseal meter.

Comments: _____

Name of Inspector: _____

POSSIBLE THEFT DETECTED

1. Investigator Notified
2. Crime Scene Secured
3. Initial Photographs Taken
4. Physical Inspection of the Scene
5. More Photographs Taken
6. Crime Scene Sketches Completed
7. Collection of Evidence
8. Complete Field Notes
9. Disconnect Service
10. Notice to Consumer
11. Evidence Logged and Secured
12. Investigation Report Completed
13. Photographs Developed
14. Laboratory Inspection of Evidence
15. Dollar Loss Determined
16. Report Submitted to Manager or Supervisor
17. Contact With Customer
18. Revenues Recovered
19. Referral for Criminal Investigation and Prosecution

PHASES OF THE INVESTIGATION

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

Take photographs of scene.
Complete field notes and initial reports.
Collect evidence and establish the custody of the evidence.
Identify potential witnesses by name, address and phone number and obtain statements, if possible.

FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

Complete investigative reports.
Check account for previous investigations.
Estimate the amount of loss.
Meter tested in shop.
Maintain custody of evidence.
Attempt to recover revenues.

PREPARE FOR COURT

Consult with attorney.
Review case file and evidence.
Pre-trial conference with witnesses.

Take pictures of the meter base with the straps from various distances back to street so the house or structure is clearly visible. Try to include identifying items such as the license plate on the customers car, street sign, or location number of the utility pole in front of the house in some of the photographs.

Remove the straps and take additional pictures of them on the ground or being held by another employee. Place another meter in the socket (or a socket cover if you are disconnecting service), seal the meter center and photograph the location exactly as you leave it.

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Account Number: _____ Meter # _____

Account Status: _____ Active _____ Inactive _____ C.O.N.P. (Cut Off-
Non Pay)

OBSERVATIONS

Time of Arrival: _____

Reason for being there: _____

Meter Reading: _____

Condition of Seal: _____

Condition of Meter: _____

Condition of Meter Prongs	_____ Clean
	_____ Scarred
	_____ Burned

Remarks (i.e., jumpers, damaged equipment, discussion with
customer, etc.)

Employee Name_____
Signature

To summarize, documenting the crime scene requires:

1. Direct testimony of witnesses to the scene.
2. Numerous photographs.
3. Interviews with other possible witnesses.
4. Investigation reports.
5. Crime scene sketches.
6. Evidence legally collected at the scene.

INTERVIEW GUIDE - METER READER

Name: _____ Date: _____

Crime Scene Location: _____

Work Telephone: _____ Home Telephone _____

Length of time employed as a meter reader: _____

1. Date and time you arrived at the scene of the theft? _____

2. Why were you there? _____

3. What did you initially observe? _____

4. Why did you become suspicious? _____

5. What else did you observe? _____

6. Did you see or talk to anyone, including the customer? If so, tell me all of the details. (Especially motive, the statements of the customer, his demeanor, etc.)

7. Who did you contact about the situation and when? _____

8. What else did you see or do? (Was the crime scene disturbed)? _____

INTERVIEW GUIDE - WITNESS

Name: _____ Date: _____

Crime Scene Location: _____

Witness Information

Home Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Business Address: _____

Business Telephone: _____

1. What is your relationship to the suspect? _____

2. What did you personally observe or hear? Please be exact. _____

3. Describe the suspect to me (name, address, physical description). _____

4. Why did you decide to report this? _____

5. What else have you observed? _____

6. How well do you get along with the suspect? _____

7. Are you willing to testify to these facts in court? _____

SAMPLE LETTER TO CUSTOMER EXPLAINING UTILITY FINDINGS

Dear Customer:

On _____ our meter department found that some unauthorized person had tampered with the meter located at _____. The tampering prevented the meter from correctly reading all of the electricity used at that location. The estimated loss to the utility as a result of the tampering, including damage to equipment, is \$ _____

Since you are the person responsible for the service at this address, the total amount of these costs is being charged to your account. Payment in full is due within ten day from the receipt of this letter.

If you wish to discuss this matter with me prior to making payment, please call my office for an appointment. We are prepared to show you the evidence collected at that location and to discuss the state law and company policies regarding meter tampering.

Sincerely,

General Manager