

545.99 PENALTY.

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CHAPTER 545 Theft and Fraud

545.19 POSSESSION OF CRIMINAL TOOLS.

(a) No person shall possess or have under the person's control any substance, device, instrument, or article, with purpose to use it criminally.

(b) Each of the following constitutes prima-facie evidence of criminal purpose:

(1) Possession or control of any dangerous ordnance, or the materials or parts for making dangerous ordnance, in the absence of circumstances indicating the dangerous ordnance, materials, or parts are intended for legitimate use;

(2) Possession or control of any substance, device, instrument, or article designed or specially adapted for criminal use;

(3) Possession or control of any substance, device, instrument, or article commonly used for criminal purposes, under circumstances indicating the item is intended for criminal use.

(c) Whoever violates this section is guilty of possessing criminal tools, a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the circumstances indicate that the substance, device, instrument, or article involved in the offense was intended for use in the commission of a felony, possessing criminal tools is a felony and shall be prosecuted under appropriate State law.

(ORC 2923.24)

545.20 FORGERY OF IDENTIFICATION CARDS.

(a) No person shall knowingly do either of the following:

(1) Forge an identification card;

(2) Sell or otherwise distribute a card that purports to be an identification card, knowing it to have been forged.

(3) As used in this section, "identification card" means a card that includes personal information or characteristics of an individual, a purpose of which is to establish the identity of the bearer described on the card, whether the words "identity," "identification," "identification card" or other similar words appear on the card.

(b) Whoever violates subsection (a) hereof is guilty of forging identification cards or selling or distributing forged identification cards. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, forging or selling or distributing forged identification cards is a misdemeanor of the first degree. If the offender previously has been convicted of a violation of this section or Ohio R.C. 2913.31 (B), forging identification cards or selling or distributing forged identification cards is a misdemeanor of the first degree and, in addition, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not less than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00).

(ORC 2913.31)

545.21 TAMPERING WITH AND THEFT OF UTILITIES.

(a) No person shall knowingly, without the utility's consent, with intent to violate subsection (b) hereof:

(1) Tamper with a gas, electric, steam or water meter, conduit or attachment of a utility;

(2) Reconnect a gas, electric, steam or water meter, conduit or attachment of a utility that has been disconnected by the utility.

In a prosecution under subsection (a)(1) hereof, proof that a meter, conduit or attachment of a utility has been tampered with is prima-facie evidence that the person who is obligated to pay for the service rendered through the meter, conduit or attachment, and who is in possession or control of the meter, conduit or attachment at the time the tampering occurred, has caused the tampering with intent to violate subsection (b) hereof.

In a prosecution under subsection (a)(2) hereof, proof that a meter, conduit or attachment disconnected by a utility has been reconnected without the consent of the utility is prima-facie

evidence that the person in possession or control of the meter, conduit or attachment at the time of the reconnection has reconnected the meter.

As used in this section, “utility” means any electric light company, gas company, natural gas company, pipe-line company, waterworks company or heating or cooling company, as defined in Ohio R.C. 4905.03(A)(4), (5), (6), (7), (8) or (9) and elsewhere, its lessees, trustees or receivers, or any similar utility owned or operated by a political subdivision.

As used in this section, to “tamper” means to interfere with, damage or bypass a utility meter, conduit or attachment with the intent to impede the correct registration of a meter or the proper functions of a conduit or attachment so as to reduce the amount of utility service that is registered on such meter.

(b) No person shall knowingly consume any gas, electricity, steam or water that has not been correctly registered because a meter, conduit or attachment of a utility has been tampered with, or knowingly use service that has been disconnected by a utility and reconnected without the utility’s consent.

(c) Such utility shall notify its customers, on an annual basis, of the consequences of tampering with or bypassing a meter.

(d) Whoever violates subsection (a) hereof is guilty of tampering with utility equipment, a misdemeanor of the first degree, provided the cost of the gas, electricity, steam or water stolen, plus the cost of repair or replacement of the meters, conduits or attachments damaged in violation of subsection (a)(1) or (a)(2) hereof is less than three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and provided the offender has not previously been convicted of a violation of subsection (a) hereof. Whoever violates subsection (a) hereof shall make restitution to the utility for the cost of repair or replacement of the meters, conduits or attachments damaged and for the value of the gas, electricity, steam or water consumed.

(e) Whoever violates subsection (b) hereof is guilty of theft of utility service, a misdemeanor of the first degree, provided the value of the gas, electricity, steam or water is less than three hundred dollars (\$300.00) and provided the offender has not previously been convicted of a violation of subsection (b) hereof. Whoever violates subsection (b) hereof shall make restitution to the utility for the value of the gas, electricity, steam or water consumed in violation of that subsection. (Ord. 42-98. Passed 10-27-98.)

545.22 IDENTITY FRAUD.

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Former Section 545.22 has been deleted from the Codified Ordinances. Ohio R.C. 2913.49, from which Section 545.22 was derived, has been reclassified from a misdemeanor to a felony offense.)

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(EDITOR’S NOTE: See Section 501.99 for penalties applicable to any misdemeanor classification.)

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