

THE MICHIGAN PENAL CODE (EXCERPT)
Act 328 of 1931

750.282 Offenses against water, steam, electric, or gas companies, or propane gas dealers or distributors, and boards or municipalities owning or operating plants; misdemeanor; felony; civil action not impaired by criminal prosecution; presumption; prima facie evidence of violation.

Sec. 282. (1) A person shall not do any of the following:

(a) Willfully or fraudulently injure, or fraudulently allow to be injured, a meter, wire, line, pipe, or appliance belonging to a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor.

(b) Willfully or fraudulently prevent a water, steam, electric, gas, or propane gas meter belonging to a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor from duly registering the quantity of water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas measured through the meter, or in any way hinder or interfere with the meter's proper action or just registration.

(c) Attach a line, wire, or pipe to a line, wire, pipe, or main belonging to a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor. This subdivision does not apply to the use of a ground wire to ground an electrical system.

(d) Willfully or fraudulently interfere with a pressure regulator device on a propane gas tank or incorporated into a propane gas system.

(e) Use or burn or cause to be used or burned any water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas supplied by a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor, without the written consent of the company or the propane gas dealer or distributor, or the authorized agent or officer of the company or the propane gas dealer or distributor, unless the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas passes through a meter or is measured by a meter set by the company or the propane gas dealer or distributor; fraudulently use the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas, or fraudulently waste the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas supplied by a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor.

(2) A person who violates subsection (1) is guilty of a misdemeanor if the value of the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas used, burned, or wasted, or the damage caused, as a result of the violation, is not more than \$500.00. A person who violates subsection (1) is guilty of a felony if the value of the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas used, burned, or wasted, or the damage caused, as a result of the violation, is more than \$500.00.

(3) A criminal prosecution under this section shall not in any way impair the right of the company or the propane gas dealer or distributor to full compensation in damages by civil action.

(4) The provisions of this section shall extend and apply to all offenses against all water, steam, electric, or gas companies, or propane gas dealers or distributors, and boards or municipalities owning or operating plants for producing, manufacturing, furnishing, transmitting, or conducting water, steam, electricity, or gas, either natural, liquefied, or artificial.

(5) A person who attaches any line, wire, or pipe or any other device or process to any line, wire, or pipe of a water, steam, electric, or gas company, or propane gas dealer or distributor which interferes with the proper operation and just registration of a meter within the meaning of this section, or who interferes with a pressure regulator device on a propane gas tank or incorporated into a propane gas system, is presumed to do so with intent to avoid, or to enable another to avoid, payment for the service involved.

(6) In all prosecutions under this section, proof that the defendant, other than a lessor, had control of or occupied the premises where the offense was committed, or received the benefit of the water, steam, electric current, gas, or propane gas used or consumed, shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.

History: 1931, Act 328, Eff. Sept. 18, 1931;—CL 1948, 750.282;—Am. 1984, Act 37, Eff. Apr. 12, 1984;—Am. 1987, Act 32, Eff. Mar. 30, 1988.

Former law: See section 2 of Act 277 of 1911, being CL 1915, § 15362; and CL 1929, § 17043.