



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER  
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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## **Berkeley Man Pleads Guilty To Arson**

**Columbia, S.C.** - Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that James Gary Humbert, 41, of 705 Ponteamy Branch Road in St. Stephen, pleaded guilty on October 4, 2005, to one (1) count of Arson in the Third Degree, a felony violation of §16-11-110(C)(1), and punishable to between one (1) and ten (10) years imprisonment.

On or about May 26, 1998, Mary Lynn Barnette reported to the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department that her 1998 Toyota Tercel had been stolen. Ms. Barnette was an acquaintance of Humbert at the time of the alleged theft. Humbert called Barnette in the early morning hours May 27, 1998, and told her that the vehicle had been in his possession, but that it was no longer in his possession at that time. The same morning, the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department notified her that deputies had recovered the vehicle and that it had been burned. Barnette later explained to State Farm Insurance that she had confronted Humbert regarding the fire, and that he admitted burning the vehicle.

Judge Daniel F. Pieper sentenced Humbert to six (6) years imprisonment suspended upon the service of one (1) year imprisonment, followed by five (5) years probation. Humbert was also ordered to pay restitution of \$7,835 to South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company.

The case was investigated by the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department, the State Law Enforcement Division, and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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