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Police nab alleged copper thief

By Meghan McCormick

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NORMAN — Noble police arrested a man early Friday morning who they say intended to steal copper wiring from private property.

Prosecutors charged Chad Dean Rice, 28, of Washington, Okla., on Friday in Cleveland County District Court with a felony count of entering with intent to steal copper, according to court records. Rice also was charged with trespassing, a misdemeanor.

According to a court affidavit, a Noble police officer saw Rice on the upper shaft of an OG&E electrical pole on private property. Rice had pole climbing equipment with him.

Rice was seen cutting copper lines off the electrical pole with a pair of wire cutters when he was contacted by police, the affidavit stated

According to the affidavit, Rice told police Christmas is coming up and he heard that copper prices were up. Rice was taken to the Noble Police Department.

Rice was booked into the Cleveland County Detention Center.

A Cleveland County Sheriff's Department employee said Rice remained in custody Friday afternoon.

Court records show Rice pleaded no contest Dec. 3 in McClain County District Court to possession of a firearm after former felony conviction. He was given a seven-year suspended sentence.

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