

State of South Carolina
Solicitor, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

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W. Walter Wilkins

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

April 9, 2013

Man Pleads Guilty to Attempted Murder and Burglary

Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor Walt Wilkins states that Harold Watts, 52, pled guilty on April 8, 2013, to Attempted Murder & Burglary in the First Degree. The Honorable Letitia Verdin sentenced Watts to thirty-five (35) years in the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

Evidence presented at the hearing by Assistant Solicitor Allen Fretwell established that Watts entered the victim's residence on West Georgia Road in Greenville, armed with a canister of gasoline, and chased his former girlfriend out the back of her trailer. Watts caught up to the victim outside, grabbing her around the neck with one arm and dousing her with gasoline with the other. Watts then set the victim on fire. The victim ran screaming to her neighbor's back door and then attempted to roll around in the yard to put out the flames. As the victim was attempting to put out the flames, Watts approached and poured more gasoline on her. Emergency service providers quickly arrived after the neighbor called 911, and the victim was eventually air-lifted to the Grady Burn Center. Watts walked into a convenience store 30 minutes after the incident and told the clerk to call 911 since he had just set his girlfriend on fire.

Since both of Watts' charges carry a maximum sentence of twenty years or more, Watts will not be eligible for parole and will be required to serve at least eighty-five (85) percent of his sentence, according to Wilkins.