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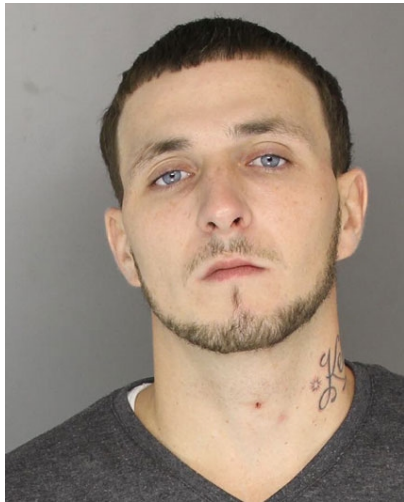
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 23, 2015

Three Philadelphia Men Arrested In Power Tool Theft Ring



Matthew Suarez



Nicholas Suarez



Donald Hodum

Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman and Whitemarsh Township Police Chief T. Michael Beaty announce the arrest of Matthew Suarez, Nicholas Suarez and Donald Hodum. The three men are charged with crimes totaling 197 counts of Theft by Unlawful Taking, Conspiracy of Theft by Unlawful Taking and related charges. The charges stem from thefts of power tools from motor vehicles in three counties. The value of the stolen power tools in regard to the respective defendants ranges from \$22,546 to \$72,464.

In the months of August and September 2014, Whitemarsh Township Police received complaints of multiple thefts from motor vehicles--specifically power tools from work trucks and vans. Most of the thefts were committed in a similar manner, where the actors would take a flathead screwdriver and punch the lock of the door of the van or truck to gain access. Further investigation, revealed there were numerous victims of these types of thefts in townships throughout Montgomery, Delaware and Chester Counties.

On September 27th, 2014, a concerned citizen called the police for a possible theft from a motor vehicle on the 3000 block of Rebel Road in Whitemarsh Township during the early hours of that morning. Police were able to stop and detain the suspects, who were identified as Nicholas and Matthew Suarez. Search warrants were executed for the vehicles they were in and various stolen tools were located in the vehicles.

Through further investigation, led by Detectives Richard Zadroga and Craig Cubbin, it was determined that Matthew Suarez, Nicholas Suarez, and Donald Hodum had been selling the stolen power tools. Police were able to identify the tools that were sold as the same tools that were taken during many of the reported thefts.

Police were also able to search all three of the suspects' cell phone records and were also able to obtain cell tower information. Through the analysis that was conducted, the police were able to determine that the three suspects' phones were present near the locations of numerous thefts in the time period of when the thefts occurred.

Matthew Suarez was originally arrested on October 8, 2014 and Magisterial District Judge John Murray set bail at \$25,000 cash. He waived his Preliminary Hearing and pled guilty to Conspiracy of Theft by Unlawful Taking. Judge Wendy Demchick-Alloy is scheduled to sentence him on April 22, 2015. He was subsequently charged with the additional thefts and is scheduled for a Preliminary Hearing on April 2, 2015 in front of Magisterial District Judge John Murray.

Nicholas Suarez was arrested on December 2, 2014 and Magisterial District Judge John Murray set bail at \$15,000 cash. He waived his Preliminary Hearing and is awaiting his Pre Trial Conference on May 5, 2015 in front of Judge Wendy Demchick-Alloy. He was subsequently charged with the additional thefts and is scheduled for a Preliminary Hearing on April 2, 2015 in front of Magisterial District Judge John Murray.

Donald Hodum was arrested on March 12, 2014 and bail was set at \$5,000 cash by Magisterial District Judge John S. Murray. His Preliminary Hearing is also scheduled for April 2, 2015.

The cases will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Alexandria MacMaster of the Economic Crimes Unit.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.