



Fresno County Sheriff's Department
Margaret Mims, Sheriff
News Release

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MEDIA ADVISORY: Dropped Cell Phone Leads To Metal Theft Arrests

Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims today announced the arrests of 19 year old Selma resident David Sandoval Gomez, and 20 year old Fresno resident Joel Velasquez. Both were arrested on charges of grand theft, possession of stolen property and felony vandalism.

On May 29th, patrol deputies responded to a storage lot located on the corner of Orange & Malaga regarding a grand theft call.

The victim advised that he had 30 portable buildings stored on the lot and that the air conditioning units had been stolen. The victim estimated the loss to be approximately \$150,000.00. The victim further advised that the thefts had taken place over several days. The suspects also caused approximately \$60,000.00 worth of damage to the trailers.

Investigators from the Sheriff's Ag Task Force responded and during the investigation, a receipt for recycling an air conditioning unit was located at the scene. The receipt was made out to Gomez. A green colored pick up truck was also seen leaving the lot after the theft.

On June 19th, deputies responded to a residence located in the 2500 block of E. Lincoln Ave. regarding a possible burglary in progress call. A neighbor called the Sheriff's Department when she observed a truck pull up to the residence. Subjects exited the truck and starting removing scrap metal from the yard. The neighbor started yelling at the subjects at which time they fled in the truck.

Knowing that the residents were out of town, the witness checked the yard area where the suspects had been and located a cell phone. She later turned the cell phone over to deputies.

A subsequent check of the cell phone found it to belong to Gomez.

Further investigation tied both Gomez and Velasquez to the cases, as well as others. Both were arrested yesterday after Gomez contacted the Sheriff's Department to retrieve his cell phone. They were later booked into the Fresno County Jail.

In addition to the open charges, Gomez was arrested for committing a felony while on probation.

Anyone with information regarding these cases is asked to contact Detective Douglas Bolton at 898-0667, the Fresno County Sheriff's Department at 488-3111, or CrimeStoppers at 498-STOP(7867).