



Fresno County Sheriff - Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff - Coroner

April 27, 2017

News Release

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FSO Ag Task Force Detectives Arrest High School Copper Wire Thief

Wednesday afternoon, detectives with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office Ag Task Force arrested 27 year old Gene Morris of Fresno. He has been booked into the Fresno County Jail on felony charges of vandalism, concealing stolen property and misdemeanors of possession of burglary tools and possession of drug paraphernalia. His bail has been set at \$33,000.

On Saturday, 4/22/17, surveillance cameras at Central West High School recorded a man stealing approximately 75 yards of copper wire. The suspect was on the campus between the hours of 2:45 am and 3:00 am. The video shows him making his way over to a utility box, opening it, pulling out the wire, cutting the strands and then hauling it away. On Tuesday, local media broadcast the video, which generated leads for detectives to follow. On Wednesday, detectives identified Morris as a person of interest in the case. They went to his home on the 900 block of N. Monte Ave. in Fresno and contacted Morris. At the home, detectives found evidence of the copper wire which was stolen from Central West High School.

Morris' theft caused approximately \$10,000 in damage to the school and caused two classrooms to lose electricity. The need for repairs disrupted the learning environment of students and came at a cost to taxpayers.

Anyone with additional information about Gene Morris should call Fresno County Sheriff's Detective Mike Wynn at (559) 600-8155 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-STOP (7867). You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a \$1,000 cash reward.