



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org
NYPD DCPI (646) 610-6700

TIRE AND RIM STREET CREW BUSTED
FOR SWIPING EXPENSIVE WHEELS AND LEAVING CARS ON CRATES IN QUEENS

*Trio from Queens & Brooklyn Charged with Grand Larceny and More;
Main Defendant Extradited from Pennsylvania After Fleeing New York;
The Accused Face Up to 7 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, announced today that Jonathan Pacheco and two others have been variously charged with grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly stealing tires and rims from cars parked on streets in Queens. The pit-stop style strippings occurred throughout the borough, and in the middle of the night, between November 2019 and May 2020.

District Attorney Katz said, “Under the cover of darkness, and armed with car jacks and lug wrenches, these defendants allegedly stole tires and rims from more than a dozen cars. This kind of thievery costs car owners thousands of dollars, but this crew is now officially out of business. I want to thank the NYPD’s Auto Crime Division for their hard work throughout this investigation and my team for their diligence in getting these alleged criminals off the streets.”

Commissioner Shea said, “Moving stealthily at night to strip cars parked on New York’s streets of their tires and rims, as alleged in this case, can never be accepted. Thankfully, our NYPD detectives and partners in the Queens district attorney’s office worked tirelessly to detect this crew and stop their illegal scheme.”

Pacheco, 30, is the main defendant and when it became known that he was wanted by police, he fled the state. Pacheco was apprehended in Pennsylvania and extradited to Queens this week to face charges. Pacheco’s co-defendants are Fabian Rodriguez and Jacob Martinez. All three men are variously charged in three complaints with auto stripping in the first degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree and grand larceny in the fourth degree. **(See Addendum for detailed information on each defendant).**

According to the charges, on November 7, 2019, Pacheco is observed on video surveillance around 12:32 a.m. in the vicinity of 233rd Street in Oakland Gardens. He parked his Subaru directly across from a 2019 Honda Civic and with an unknown accomplice allegedly removed the lug nuts from the Honda’s wheels and took all four tires and rims. When the owner of the vehicle returned to the spot where he had parked his car, the Honda was propped on top of milk crates.

Continuing, DA Katz said, the accused ring of thieves repeated this scenario, with Pacheco driving throughout Queens in search of parked Hondas. Over the course of six months, the crew struck in Bellerose, Hollis, Forest Hills, Middle Village, Fresh Meadows, Flushing, Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, Glendale, Jamaica Hills, Bayside, Maspeth and Rego Park. Sometimes Pacheco worked with one or two co-defendants and sometimes with other unapprehended and unknown individuals.

District Attorney Katz said on February 24, 2020, defendant Pacheco and the two co-defendants along with an unapprehended other are observed on video surveillance parking their Subaru and Ford near a black 2019 Honda Accord at the intersection of 153rd and Reeves streets around 1:30 a.m. All three defendants allegedly participated in this theft. Martinez hauled milk crates from the Ford to the Honda and then carried two tires and two rims back to the Ford. Rodriguez also rolled a tire and rim to the waiting Ford. After all four tires and rims were removed from the Honda, Pacheco put the car jack back in his Subaru and the three defendants and an unapprehended other left the scene.

The DA added that defendant Pacheco participated in a total of 14 steals and made deals to sell the stolen tires and rims to a buyer he did not know was an undercover detective. In January and February 2020, Pacheco offered to sell the tires and rims to his “buyer” and set up a meeting to exchange eight stolen tires and rims for a total of \$1350 cash.

In all, the defendants allegedly stole up to approximately \$42,000 worth of tires and rims.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Scott Berger, Michael Carleo and John Bulone, of the New York City Police Department’s Auto Crimes Division under the supervision of Lieutenant Joseph May.

Assistant District Attorney Sean Murphy, of the District Attorney’s Major Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Hana Kim, Chief of the Auto Crimes and Insurance Fraud Unit, Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief of Major Economic Crimes, Catherine C. Kane, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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ADDENDUM

JONATHAN PACHECO, 30, of 97th Street in Queens, was arraigned this morning before Queens Criminal Court Judge Jeffrey Gershuny on three complaints charging him with auto stripping in the first degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree, grand larceny in the fourth degree. Judge Gershuny ordered the defendant to return to court on February 11, 2021. If convicted, Pacheco faces up to 7 years in prison.

FABIAN RODRIGUEZ, 33, of 97th Street in Queens, was arraigned before Queens Criminal Court Judge Danielle Hartman on two complaints charging him with auto stripping in the first degree, criminal

possession of stolen property in the fourth degree and grand larceny in the fourth degree. The defendant's next Court date is February 18, 2021. If convicted, Rodriguez faces up to 7 years in prison.

JACOB MARTINEZ, 29, of Neptune Avenue in Brooklyn, was arraigned before Queens Criminal Court Judge Jeffrey Gershuny on a single complaint charging him with criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree and grand larceny in the fourth degree. The defendant's next Court date is February 4, 2021. If convicted, Martinez faces up to 4 years in prison.

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Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

