



San Diego County SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE INFORMATION SHEET

Subject: Spring Valley Burglary Arrest (UPDATED with Video)
Date of Release: October 27, 2020
Time of Release: 6:45 p.m.
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Provider of Information (if different): N/A

SYNOPSIS:

On August 31, 2020, at 1218 hours, Deputies responded to a welfare check at a residence in Spring Valley. A 60-year-old male victim was found by deputies deceased of natural causes in his home. The victim was transported to a mortuary by a contracted independent mortuary service.

On September 2, 2020, the victim's family called to report they discovered items, including a firearm and safe, missing from the residence.

On September 4, 2020, the victim's family reported that after reviewing surveillance video from the home, they discovered the house had been burglarized.

To download the surveillance video, visit: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/F5K01RzJio>.

Upon review of the video, at approximately 2300 hours on August 31, 2020, an unknown black male adult, later identified as Sammy Willie Gates (04-09-71), arrived at the above address in a white utility van. Gates entered the home and exited shortly after with two bags filled with unknown stolen property. Gates then returned to the residence with a gurney and an empty body bag. He exited the residence with the gurney containing the body bag full of property.

Gates is the owner and operator of Mortuary Transportation Services (MTS), a contracted independent mortuary service. Mortuary Transportation Services was not the original company used for transportation in



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this case.

On September 9, 2020, Detectives from the Rancho San Diego Sheriff's station, served a search warrant at Gates' residence in unincorporated El Cajon. The victim's safe and firearm were recovered as well as 16 additional firearms, many believed to be war relics dating back to the early 1900's. Two additional safes, multiple personal identifying documents, jewelry, watches, war medals, comic books and several thousand dollars in collectable coins were also recovered from Gates' residence. A gurney and body bags matching the surveillance video at the victim's residence were recovered from Gates' white utility van.

On September 9, 2020, Gates was arrested for 459PC residential burglary and 29800(a)(1)PC felon in possession of a firearm.

Since his arrest, Detectives have identified five additional victims. If you have additional information regarding this investigation, or believe you have knowledge of additional victims, please contact Detective Dalton at (619) 660-7037.

Call Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477 with information and you will remain anonymous. You can also download the P3 anonymous tip app at sdcrimestoppers.org. You may be eligible for up to a \$1,000 reward for information that leads to an arrest.