



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Financial fraud leads to burglary suspect

Riverside, CA -- On Friday, October 19, 2007, investigators from the Riverside Police Department responded to a residence in the city of San Bernardino, where they served a search warrant leading to the arrest of a burglary suspect conducting financial fraud using stolen checks and bank account information.

Investigators, led by Detective Charles Payne, followed up on a lead from a recent burglary in the Whitegates area of Riverside. In the burglary, jewelry, handbags, clothing, currency, checks, credit cards, and business records were stolen. The victim reported the value of her lost property at \$155,650.

Detective Payne was able to trace the suspect to an address in San Bernardino when the victim's bank account information was used to pay the suspect's utility bill. At the San Bernardino residence, investigators located stolen property taken from the Riverside victim. They also identified numerous other victims in California and adjacent states. The suspect had in her possession piles of stolen mail, checks, and personal information for dozens of victims. Also recovered in the residence were check-making software, blank check stock, two digital scales and a significant amount of methamphetamine.

Suspect Mary Vargas, 55, was arrested on charges of burglary, possession of stolen property, identity fraud, possession of forged documents and possession of narcotics for sale. Vargas was booked into Robert Presley Detention Center in Riverside and was arraigned this morning, October, 23.



Mary Vargas

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