

NEWS RELEASE

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25 defendants convicted of property crimes

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Property Team convicted 25 defendants in Mecklenburg County Superior Court during the week of April 1-5, 2013. The defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, Superior Court Judge. The convictions were for crimes that included felony breaking or entering, felony larceny, chop shop activity and organized retail theft. Based on structured sentencing laws in North Carolina, sentences ranged from probation to active prison sentences.

Among the defendants who pled guilty were:

Rethanachan Em, 21, pled guilty to 1) felony chop shop activity and 2) three counts of felony larceny. Em was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison. In September 2012, Em stole three cars, including one that was equipped with a hidden transmitter that emits a signal when activated. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police were able to track the signal to Em's home in Charlotte, where police found the three stolen vehicles. Police also discovered two radios from the cars inside Em's home. At the time of these offenses, Em was on probation for a previous chop shop conviction. As a result of his latest conviction, Em's probation was revoked, and a 6-8 month prison sentence for the prior offense was activated.



Rethanachan Em

Paul Odom, 21, pled guilty to 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) felony larceny after breaking or entering. Odom was sentenced to a total of 16-38 months in prison.

James Starnes, 33, pled guilty to 1) organized retail theft and 2) three counts of felony larceny. Starnes was sentenced to 12-24 months in prison and ordered to pay \$2,452 in restitution to the victims.

Brandon Hood, 24, pled guilty to felony larceny. Hood was sentenced to 4-14 months in prison.

Jimmy Hamilton, 18, pled guilty to misdemeanor possession of stolen goods. Hamilton was sentenced to 45 days in the Mecklenburg County jail.

Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at www.charmeckda.com.

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