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United States Attorney's Office
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News Release

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2 indicted for distributing drugs

Two St. Paul men were indicted yesterday in federal court in unrelated cases of distributing illegal substances.

Antonio Tapia Rodriguez, 38, St. Paul, was charged with one count of conspiracy to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine and one count of possession with intent to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine. Silvia Azucena Barragan-Sanchez, 23, St. Paul, was charged with one count of conspiracy, one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and cocaine, and one count of distribution of 50 or more grams of methamphetamine.

Their indictment alleges that on Dec. 17, 2008, the two did unlawfully, knowingly and intentionally conspire with each other and others to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine, and it also charges them on that same date with possession with intent to distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine.

It also alleges that on Dec. 17 Barragan-Sanchez did unlawfully, knowingly and intentionally distribute 50 or more grams of methamphetamine, as well as 50 or more grams of cocaine.

According to a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) affidavit, on Dec. 17 police received a tip that a man driving a red blazer would be delivering a pound of methamphetamine to another drug dealer in the Battle Creek area of St. Paul. Officers observed a red blazer parked at an apartment complex, and watched its driver enter an apartment building. The man, who was later identified as Rodriguez, shortly returned to his vehicle with a white bag.

A few minutes later a woman later identified as Barragan-Sanchez arrived in a Ford Explorer and parked near Rodriguez's vehicle. Officers observed Rodriguez lean inside Barragan-Sanchez's vehicle with the white bag and then leave with the bag to go back into the apartment building. Both parties eventually left the area.

Police stopped both vehicles, seized approximately 1 pound of methamphetamine from

Rodriguez's vehicle and seized approximately 2 pounds of methamphetamine from Barragan-Sanchez's vehicle.

If convicted, Rodriguez faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on each of the two counts, and Barragan-Sanchez faces life on each of her three counts. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the St. Paul Police Department and the DEA, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas M. Hollenhorst.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.