



# Department of Justice

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Northern District of Georgia

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## **TWO POLK COUNTY MEN INDICTED BY FEDERAL GRAND JURY**

### ***Joint Federal/State/Local Investigation into Police Corruption, Chop Shops, Insurance Fraud, and Stolen Motor Vehicles Leads to More Federal Charges***

ROME, GA - JOHNNY LEE SUMMERVILLE, 60, and MICHAEL A. HOOPER, 48, both of Cedartown, Georgia were arraigned today before United States Magistrate Judge Walter E. Johnson on separate federal indictments. SUMMERVILLE faces federal charges of operating a chop shop, removing and altering vehicle identification numbers on motor vehicles, possessing motor vehicles with altered and removed vehicle identification numbers, possession of a stolen Caterpillar tractor, and possession of hydrocodone with the intent to distribute. HOOPER is charged with committing insurance fraud by falsely reporting to the Polk County Police Department that his rollback wrecker had been stolen, and then filing a fraudulent insurance claim for the theft of the wrecker. SUMMERVILLE and HOOPER were both indicted by a federal grand jury on May 18, 2010.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, "The federal indictments brought against SUMMERVILLE and HOOPER bring to six the number of Polk County residents and former residents who have been charged with federal offenses that were brought to light during an 18-month undercover investigation by federal, state, and local law enforcement authorities. The investigation focused on police corruption, the operation of chop shops in Polk County, motor vehicle thefts, and insurance fraud."

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: Between January 2001 and October 6, 2009, SUMMERVILLE operated a chop shop. SUMMERVILLE removed and/or altered the vehicle identification numbers (VINs) for a 2006 Chevrolet Silverado pick-up truck, a 1991 Chevrolet C/K one ton pick-up truck, and a 1988 Chevrolet S-10 pick-up truck, and then possessed the same vehicles knowing that the VINs had been removed or altered. He also possessed a stolen Caterpillar tractor with knowledge that it was stolen. In addition, on two occasions SUMMERVILLE possessed hydrocodone with the intent to distribute.

If convicted of operating a chop shop, SUMMERVILLE faces a maximum

sentence of 15 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. SUMMERVILLE faces 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine on each charge that he removed or altered a VIN on a motor vehicle, and 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine on each charge that he knowingly possessed a motor vehicle with an altered or removed VIN and on the charge that he knowingly possessed the stolen Caterpillar tractor. SUMMERVILLE faces up to 10 years in prison and a fine of \$500,000 for each count that charges that he possessed hydrocodone with the intent to distribute.

The indictment brought against HOOPER charges him with three counts of using the mail or interstate wire transmission in furtherance of the insurance fraud scheme. HOOPER faces a maximum sentence of up to 20 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000 on each count. In determining the actual sentence for each defendant, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

In the other cases that have been charged in federal court:

● KENNETH LANE GRAVETT, a former Polk County police officer, pleaded guilty to insurance fraud after he falsely reported that his Harley Davidson motorcycle had been stolen and then tried to collect insurance proceeds on the motorcycle. On January 28, 2010, Gravett was sentenced to serve 10 months in home confinement and five years on federal probation. He was also ordered to pay \$12,517.02 in restitution.

● JUSTIN MATTHEW DAWSON, a former City of Acworth police officer, pleaded guilty to lying to FBI agents during the investigation. On May 6, 2010, he was sentenced to one year probation. Because both GRAVETT and DAWSON were convicted of felony offenses, they have lost their certifications with the Peace Officers Standards and Training Council of Georgia, therefore, they can no longer obtain employment as law enforcement officers in this state.

● MICHAEL STEPHEN ROBINSON, a former Polk County Deputy Sheriff, has been indicted on charges that he aided and abetted GRAVETT in committing insurance fraud, that he illegally possessed a rifle with a sawed off barrel, and that he possessed a motor vehicle with an altered VIN. ROBINSON is scheduled for trial on July 17, 2010, before United States District Court Judge Robert L. Vining, Jr.

● MARK ANTHONY SPARKS, a Polk County police officer, is charged with operating a chop shop, possessing motor vehicles with altered and/or removed VINs, and obstructing the joint investigation. SPARKS' trial date has not yet been set.

This investigation is being conducted by law enforcement officers with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Polk County Police Department, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Polk County Sheriff's

Office and the Bartow County Drug Task Force.

Assistant United States Attorney William L. McKinnon, Jr. is prosecuting the cases.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.justice.gov/usao/gan](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan).