



OFFICE OF THE
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Stanislaus County

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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: February 8, 2010

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Michael Chase Stafford
Auto Thief Sentenced
to 4 Years, 8 Months

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Michael Chase Stafford, age 25, of Atwater, was convicted of auto theft and possession of methamphetamine. Stafford also admitted a prior auto theft conviction from February 2009. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On January 21, 2010 at around 11:45 a.m. in the area of Romeo Avenue and Sonora Avenue in Modesto, Stafford was observed by officers of the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (STANCATT) driving a 2010 blue Ford F-150 pick-up truck that was owned by Enterprise Car Rental agency and had been reported stolen out of Modesto on December 23, 2009. After stopping Stafford, he claimed that he bought the new truck for \$1800 but had no contact information about the seller. Officers observed no damage to the ignition and Stafford had the keys to the truck. Stafford had a plastic baggie inside his left front pants pocket that was later analyzed by the Department of Justice and found to contain methamphetamine.

Upon entry of his guilty plea, the Honorable Nancy Ashley sentenced Stafford to four years and eight months in the California Rehabilitation Center.

Stanislaus County residents can report suspected vehicle theft activity to their local law enforcement agency or contact the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (STANCATT) at: (209) 545-7316.

IF YOU OBSERVE A THEFT IN PROGRESS, DIAL 911

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