



# AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

Office of Public Information

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## AURORA POLICE ARREST TWO MEN AFTER THEY SET FIRE TO VEHICLE ON CITY'S NEAR WEST SIDE

Aurora Police have arrested and charged two men after they set fire to a vehicle on the city's near west side early Monday morning.

Just after 1:15 a.m. on Monday, Aurora's 911 center received a call from a homeowner in the 400 block of Michigan Avenue reporting that her vehicle was on fire in the driveway. She told dispatchers that she received a motion alert from her exterior cameras, and when she opened the camera stream on her smartphone, she saw her vehicle on fire in the driveway. Aurora Police officers and the Aurora Fire Department responded to the home and firefighters worked quickly to extinguish the fire.

Arson investigators from the Aurora Fire Department and detectives from Aurora Police's Bureau of Investigations responded to the scene. They began interviewing potential witnesses, canvassing the area and investigating the specific circumstances of the incident. Evidence Technicians from Aurora Police's Evidence Unit also responded to the scene to identify and collect forensic evidence from the incident.

Approximately seven minutes later, an investigator with Aurora Police's Special Operations Group performed a traffic stop in the area of Galena Boulevard and Union Street. When the investigator approached the vehicle, the interior smelled like gasoline.

Officers on the scene of the vehicle fire reviewed the surveillance video, which showed two suspects setting fire to the SUV. Officers were able to identify a male suspect with a long braided ponytail. The information about the description of the suspect was communicated to officers on the scene of the traffic stop and they noticed one of the people inside of the vehicle also had long hair in a braided ponytail.

18-year-old Mario Palacios, of the 1000 block of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in Aurora, and 20-year-old Xavier Bijarro, of the 300 block of Harmony Drive in North Aurora, were taken into custody for the vehicle fire on Michigan Avenue. Detectives reviewed the details of the investigation and evidence in the case with the Kane County State's Attorney's Office, who authorized the following charges:

Mario Palacios

One Class 2 Felony count of Arson

Xavier Bijarro

One Class 2 Felony count of Arson

Charges are not proof of guilt. The defendants listed in this release are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial, at which it is the burden of the State to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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(APD Report: AUPR200005482)

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Mario Palacios  
Aurora Police Department



Xavier Bijarro  
Aurora Police Department