



Ceres Department of Public Safety

Art de Werk, Chief/Acting City Manager/Director of Public Safety



Chief Art de Werk

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
News Release Contact: Sergeant Jose Berber
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On 02/24/2011, at 09:10 AM, Ceres Police Investigators served a search warrant at 3465 Hollowell in Ceres in reference to an identity theft. Individuals were suspected of using other persons Social Security numbers to purchase homes, cars, and other goods and services.

During the search of the home, investigators discovered evidence of false social security numbers and various false identifications and accounts which were being used fraudulently. Numerous weapons were discovered at the home including handguns and rifles; 27 in total. Several of the firearms were illegal assault rifles.

ICE Agents assisted in this case and are conducting follow up investigations on weapons charges and the immigration status of the apprehended individuals.

Arrested at the scene were Jose Chavez (35 years) and Rosario Velarde (38 years). They were booked into the Stanislaus County jail on the following charges:

114 P.C. (using false documents to conceal citizenship and resident status)

530.5(a) P.C (misuse of personal identifying information)

12280(b) P.C. (possession of an assault weapon)

This is an on going investigation. Detectives are following up on potential victims. It is too early in the investigation to determine how many identities have been used fraudulently.

Investigators are attempting to discover how long these individuals have been using the stolen social security numbers and identities. Investigators are not releasing any more information on the case at this time. However, they are encouraging anyone with any information regarding this case to contact Detective Britton Moore at (209) 538-5627 or contact:

**The Stanislaus Area Crime Stoppers 1-866-60-Crime
Text Tips: "274637" TIP 704 in the wording
Website: www.modestopolice.com/crimestoppers**

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James Robbins, Sergeant

Ceres Police Department