

# ORIGINAL OFFENSE / INCIDENT REPORT

Complaint Number Reference CN

Date and Time of Report

12132158

06/18/2012 07:45:00

Primary offense:

**STOLEN PROPERTY-RECEIVING**

Primary Reporting Officer: Anderson, Charles M

Name of location/business:

Primary squad: 181

Location of incident: 512 SNELLING AV N

Secondary reporting officer:

ST PAUL, MN 55104

Approver: Kane, Patrick

District: Western

Date & time of occurrence: 06/06/2012 14:45:00 to

Site:

06/15/2012 13:20:00

Arrest made:

Secondary offense:

SEARCH WARRANT-EXECUTION OF SEARCH WARRANT

Police Officer Assaulted or Injured:

Police Officer Assisted Suicide:

Crime Scene Processed:

## OFFENSE DETAILS

### STOLEN PROPERTY-RECEIVING

Attempt Only:

Appears to be Gang Related:

**Crime Scene**

**Method & Point of Entry**

Type: Office/commercial

Force used:

Hid Inside:

Description: Office/commercial

Point of entry:

Method:

### SEARCH WARRANT-EXECUTION OF SEARCH WARRANT

Attempt Only:

Appears to be Gang Related:

**Crime Scene**

**Method & Point of Entry**

Type: Office/commercial

Force used:

Hid Inside:

Description: Office/commercial

Point of entry:

Method:

## NAMES

Other

Cuny, Sean

7000 TARGET PA N Apt NCB-0206

BROOKLYN PARK, MN 55445

**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:

Alias:

AKA First Name:

AKA Last Name:

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**Details**

Sex: Male      Race: White      DOB:      Resident Status:  
 Hispanic:      Age:      from      to

**Phones**

Home:      Cell: 612-382-5133      Contact:  
 Work: 763-440-2522      Fax: 763-440-3608      Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation: SENIOR INVESTIGATOR      Employer: TARGET CORP.

**Identification**

SSN:      License or ID#:      License State:

Other      Piazza Market  
 512 SNELLING AV N  
 MN 55104

**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:  
 Alias:  
 AKA First Name:      AKA Last Name:

**Details**

Sex:      Race:      DOB:      Resident Status:  
 Hispanic:      Age:      from      to

**Phones**

Home:      Cell:      Contact:  
 Work:      Fax:      Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation:      Employer:

**Identification**

SSN:      License or ID#:      License State:

Owner      Mekonnen, Ephrem Sahle  
 5337 OLIVER AV N  
 BROOKLYN CENTER, MN 55430

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**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:

Alias:

AKA First Name:

AKA Last Name:

**Details**

Sex: Male

Race: Other

DOB: 8/20/1971

Resident Status:

Hispanic:

Age: 40

from

to

**Phones**

Home:

Cell:

Contact:

Work: 651-645-7488

Fax:

Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation: PART OWNER

Employer: PIAZZA MARKET

**Identification**

SSN:

License or ID#: E725081085014

License State: MN

Owner

Sppd

367 GROVE ST

ST PAUL, MN 55101

**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:

Alias:

AKA First Name:

AKA Last Name:

**Details**

Sex:

Race:

DOB:

Resident Status:

Hispanic:

Age:

from

to

**Phones**

Home:

Cell:

Contact:

Work:

Fax:

Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation:

Employer:

**Identification**

SSN:

License or ID#:

License State:

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**Suspect** Sahle, Amanuel Mekonnen  
 1865 47TH ST E  
**KNOWN** INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MN 55077

**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:

Alias:

AKA First Name:

AKA Last Name:

**Details**

Sex: Male Race: Other DOB: 12/26/1968 Resident Status:  
 Hispanic: Age: 43 from to

**Phones**

Home: Cell: Contact:  
 Work: 651-645-7488 Fax: Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation: PART OWNER Employer: PIAZZA MARKET

**Identification**

SSN: License or ID#: H008040443008 License State: MN

**Physical Description**

US: Metric:  
 Height: to Build: Hair Length: Hair Color:  
 Weight: to Skin: Facial Hair: Hair Type:  
 Teeth: Eye Color: Blood Type:

**Offender Information**

Arrested: Pursuit engaged: Violated Restraining Order:  
 DUI: Resistance encountered:  
 Condition: Taken to health care facility: Medical release obtained:

**Suspect** Sahle, Esayas Mekonnen  
 5337 OLIVER AV N  
**KNOWN** BROOKLYN CENTER, MN 55430

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**Nicknames or Aliases**

Nick Name:

Alias:

AKA First Name:

AKA Last Name:

**Details**

Sex: Male

Race: Other

DOB: 7/17/1984

Resident Status:

Hispanic:

Age: 27

from

to

**Phones**

Home:

Cell:

Contact:

Work: 651-645-7488

Fax:

Pager:

**Employment**

Occupation: CLERK

Employer: PIAZZA MARKET

**Identification**

SSN:

License or ID#: H598057009322

License State: MN

**Physical Description**

US:

Metric:

Height: to

Build:

Hair Length:

Hair Color:

Weight: to

Skin:

Facial Hair:

Hair Type:

Teeth:

Eye Color:

Blood Type:

**Offender Information**

Arrested:

Pursuit engaged:

Violated Restraining Order:

DUI:

Resistance encountered:

Condition:

Taken to health care facility:

Medical release obtained:

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## SOLVABILITY FACTORS

Suspect can be Identified: Yes

By: POLICE

Photos Taken: Yes

Stolen Property Traceable: Yes

Evidence Turned In: Yes

Property Turned In: Yes

Related Incident:

### Lab

Biological Analysis:

Fingerprints Taken:

Narcotic Analysis:

Items Fingerprinted:

Lab Comments:

## PROPERTY

### ITEM #1

Type of Loss: Recovered

Date of Loss:

Location Lost:

Owner: Sppd

Date Recovered: 6/6/2012

Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING

Model #:

Quantity:

Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Cash/currency / Cash/Currency

Total value: \$10.00

Description: (2) \$5.00 US CURRENCY NOTES

Turned in at: Prop room money locker

Locker ID #:

Lab exams:

### ITEM #2

Type of Loss: Recovered

Date of Loss:

Location Lost:

Owner: Sppd

Date Recovered: 6/7/2012

Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING

Model #:

Quantity:

Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Cash/currency / Cash/Currency

Total value: \$10.00

Description: (2) \$5.00 US CURRENCY NOTES

Turned in at: Prop room money locker

Locker ID #:

Lab exams:

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06/18/2012 07:45:00

Primary offense:

STOLEN PROPERTY-RECEIVING

ITEM #3

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Sppd      Date Recovered: 6/11/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity:      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Cash/currency / Cash/Currency      Total value: \$12.00  
 Description: (8) \$0.25 US CURRENCY COIN, AND (1) \$10.00 US CURRENCY NOTE

Turned in at: Prop room money locker      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #4

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Sppd      Date Recovered: 6/14/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity:      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Cash/currency / Cash/Currency      Total value: \$4.00  
 Description: (4) \$1.00 US CURRENCY NOTES

Turned in at: Prop room money locker      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #5

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Sppd      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity: 3      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property / Household items      Total value: \$35.97  
 Description: (3) 2.96 L TIDE LAUNDRY DETERGENT- ON SMALL SHELF 20 FT FROM MAIN DOOR

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #6

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity:      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property / Miscellaneous items      Total value:  
 Description: (1) PACK OF OPEN CIGARETTES - CASH BOX BEHIND MAIN COUNTER

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

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Primary offense:

STOLEN PROPERTY-RECEIVING

ITEM #7

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Sppd      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity: 3      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property      / Household items      Total value: \$35.97  
 Description: 2.95 L TIDE LAUNDRY DETERGENT - BEHIND COUNTER

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #8

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Sppd      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity: 3      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property      / Household items      Total value: \$35.97  
 Description: 2.95 L TIDE LAUNDRY DETERGENT - NW ENTRY TO BASEMENT

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #9

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity: 1      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property      / Miscellaneous items      Total value:  
 Description: USDA CERTIFICATE SHOWING OWNERSHIP INFORMATION - BEHIND COUNTER

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:

ITEM #10

Type of Loss: Recovered      Date of Loss:      Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market      Date Recovered: 6/15/2012      Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #:      Quantity: 1      Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property      / Miscellaneous items      Total value:  
 Description: PAPERWORK W/ AMANUEL SAHLE AS RETAILER - BLACK FILING CABINET BEHIND COUNTER

Turned in at: Property Room      Locker ID #:      Lab exams:



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**ITEM #11**

Type of Loss: Recovered Date of Loss: Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market Date Recovered: 6/15/2012 Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #: Quantity: 24 Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property / Household items Total value:  
 Description: 13 OZ CANS OF EXPIRED SIMILAC LIQUID FORMULA - SHELF BEHIND COUNTER

Turned in at: Property Room Locker ID #: Lab exams:

**ITEM #12**

Type of Loss: Recovered Date of Loss: Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market Date Recovered: 6/15/2012 Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #: Quantity: 11 Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property / Household items Total value:  
 Description: 12.9 OZ CANS OF EXPIRED SIMILAC POWDER - SHELF BEHIND COUNTER.

Turned in at: Property Room Locker ID #: Lab exams:

**ITEM #13**

Type of Loss: Recovered Date of Loss: Location Lost:  
 Owner: Piazza Market Date Recovered: 6/15/2012 Location Recovered: 512 N SNELLING  
 Model #: Quantity: 1 Serial #:

Article Type / Item: Other property / Miscellaneous items Total value:  
 Description: VIPERTEK BRAND HANDHELD STUN-GUN - DISPLAY SHELF NEAR N/W BASEMENT DOOR

Turned in at: Property Room Locker ID #: Lab exams:

**Participants:**

Person Type:	Name:	Address:	Phone:
Other	Cuny, Sean	7000 TARGET PA N Apt NCB-0206 BROOKLYN PARK, MN 55445	
Other	Piazza Market	512 SNELLING AV N MN 55104	
Owner	Mekonnen, Ephrem Sahle	5337 OLIVER AV N BROOKLYN CENTER, MN 55430	

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Primary offense:

**STOLEN PROPERTY-RECEIVING**

Owner	Sppd	367 GROVE ST ST PAUL, MN 55101
Suspect	Sahle, Amanuel Mekonnen	1865 47TH ST E INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MN 55077
Suspect	Sahle, Esayas Mekonnen	5337 OLIVER AV N BROOKLYN CENTER, MN 55430

**NARRATIVE**

I (Sergeant Charles M. Anderson/Squad 181) am assigned as an investigator in the Western District where I am responsible for investigating a wide variety of property and quality-of-life related offenses within the City of Saint Paul. In addition, I initiate numerous follow-up investigations based on arrests by patrol officers, and assist outside agencies as necessary.

I am actively involved in theft, stolen property, and shoplifting investigations. I know from training and experience that many offenders that commit theft, burglaries, and shoplifting sell stolen merchandise to storefront businesses in order to obtain money, which is oftentimes utilized to support chemical and controlled substance dependency, thereby contributing to other unlawful acts. These offenders are known as "boosters", and the storefronts that take in the stolen merchandise are known as "fencing" operations. Through my investigative experience, professional contacts, and continuing education in the area of organized retail theft, I know that common items such as laundry detergent, baby formula, baby diapers, over-the-counter medications, bedding linen sets, batteries, energy drinks, and men's razors are common items that are "boosted" from retail stores, "fenced" at storefronts, and sometimes redistributed through a wholesale "re-pack" operation. Additionally, these "boosters" often commit other crimes, such as burglaries and thefts-from-autos, in order to sell these goods to "fencing" operations. These "fencing" operations, by their support of illegal enterprise, contribute to neighborhood degradation and a perception of an acceptance for illegal activity.

I received information from non-custodial interviews, non-law enforcement corporate investigations, and a Saint Paul police burglary investigator, that the business known as "Piazza Market" located at 512 N Snelling Avenue, Saint Paul MN, tel # 651-645-7488 was involved in the illegal purchasing, storage/possession, and sale of stolen merchandise, liquid laundry detergent, cigarettes, cell phones, laptops, and other electronics. There were several store employees, and possibly an owner, involved in this illegal enterprise.

I was contacted by Target Assets Protection corporate investigator Sean CUNY. He informed me that the amount of Tide liquid laundry detergent being stolen from the sales floors of their metro area retail stores, to include stores located in Saint Paul, was impacting their losses.

I received controlled shipments of Tide liquid laundry detergent (2.95 Liters) from CUNY on 06/04/2012 (16 containers), 06/11/2012 (5 containers), and 06/12/2012 (6 containers). I received and signed an inventory for the containers of detergent, which is included with this case file. The inventories included photographs of the containers of detergent. All containers of detergent had a Target "bull's eye" logo sticker affixed to the right side of the back label. These stickers were affixed by CUNY for tracking purposes, and are not usually affixed to sales floor merchandise. I also utilized a red permanent marker to mark each container of Tide liquid laundry detergent by filling in the recycling symbol on the back label.

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As part of this investigation, a confidential reliable informant (CRI) was utilized to make several sales of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent to the business. On each and every occasion, I searched the CRI, and the CRI did not have any money or other types of contraband on their person. The CRI sold these items for cash to two employees on several occasions. The CRI told the employees on all occasions that the items he/she was selling to them were, in fact, stolen from Target stores. The CRI was told by the store employees to return with more Tide liquid laundry detergent. They also told the CRI to return in order to "take orders" for other types of merchandise. In exchange for the Tide liquid laundry detergent, the employees paid the CRI between \$2.00 and \$4.00 in cash, and marked the items for sale at \$9.99.

On 06/06/2012 the CRI was in 512 N Snelling Avenue and sold a total of four containers of Tide liquid laundry detergent (2.95 liter) to an employee later identified as Esayas Mekonnen SAHLE, 07/17/1984, 27 yoa O/M, 6'01", 165 lbs, black hair, and brown eyes, 5337 Oliver Avenue N, Brooklyn Center MN 55430, DL# H598057009322. After meeting with Esayas SAHLE, a price of \$15.00 was negotiated and the CRI was given the agreed-upon price in U.S. currency. In return Esayas SAHLE was given the containers of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent. Esayas SAHLE also told the CRI that he was interested in obtaining electronics such as car stereos, cell phones, and laptop computers.

The total value for the amount of purported Tide liquid laundry detergent involved in this transaction was \$47.96.

On 06/07/2012 the CRI was in 512 N Snelling Avenue and sold a total of four containers of Tide liquid laundry detergent (2.95 liter) to an employee later identified as owner Amanuel Mekonnen SAHLE, 12/26/1968, 43 yoa O/M, 6'00", 195 lbs, black hair, and black eyes, 1865 47th Street E, Inver Grove Heights MN 55077, DL# H008040443008. After meeting with Amanuel SAHLE, a price of \$10.00 was negotiated and the CRI was given the agreed-upon price in U.S. currency. In return Amanuel SAHLE was given the containers of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent.

The total value for the amount of purported Tide liquid laundry detergent involved in this transaction was \$47.96.

On 06/11/2012 the CRI was in 512 N Snelling Avenue and sold a total of four containers of Tide liquid laundry detergent (2.95 liter) to an employee later identified as Esayas Mekonnen SAHLE, 07/17/1984, 27 yoa male, 6'01", 165 lbs, black hair, and brown eyes. After meeting with Esayas SAHLE, a price of \$12.00 was negotiated and the CRI was given the agreed-upon price in U.S. currency. In return Esayas SAHLE was given the containers of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent.

The total value for the amount of purported Tide liquid laundry detergent involved in this transaction was \$47.96.

On 06/14/2012 the CRI was in 512 N Snelling Avenue and sold a total of three containers of Tide liquid laundry detergent (2.95 liter) to an employee later identified as owner Amanuel Mekonnen SAHLE, 12/26/1968, 43 yoa male, 6'00", 195 lbs, black hair, and black eyes. After meeting with Amanuel SAHLE, a price of \$4.00 was negotiated and the CRI was given the agreed-upon price in U.S. currency. In return Amanuel SAHLE was given the containers of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent.

The total value for the amount of purported Tide liquid laundry detergent involved in this transaction was \$35.97.

During the course of this investigation, ESAYAS SAHLE purchased eight containers of purported stolen Tide

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liquid laundry detergent, with a total value of \$95.92. AMANUEL SAHLE purchased seven containers of purported stolen Tide liquid laundry detergent, with a total value of \$83.93.

Amanuel SAHLE is listed in commercial and law enforcement databases, to include the Saint Paul Police Department's Record Management System, as an owner of the business known as "Piazza Market". Both AMANUEL SAHLE and ESAYAS SAHLE were described by the CRI. Their identities were verified through on-site undercover police presence, record's checks, and photo affirmation through law enforcement databases.

On 06/15/2012, I drafted a search warrant for 512 N Snelling (Piazza Market) pursuant to this investigation. AMANUEL SAHLE and ESAYAS SAHLE were also named as persons to be seized under the warrant. The search warrant applications were reviewed and signed by the Honorable OSTBY on that same date.

I supervised the execution of the search warrant for 512 N Snelling. Present at the execution of this search warrant were the following persons: Sergeant D. Day, Sergeant W. Slagle, SPPD Officers D. Boone, A. Siegfried, C. Koch, and S. Rioux. Upon entry we located Ephrem Sahle MEKONNEN, 08/20/1971, 40 yoa O/M, 5337 Oliver Avenue N, Brooklyn Center MN 55430 behind the counter. He was handcuffed until the location was secured, at which time he was un-cuffed and allowed to sit in a chair while supervised. A customer and a person renting a clothing area of the location (separate locked entrance) were identified and released.

Once the scene was safe the following non-law enforcement agent assisted: City of Saint Paul DSI Health Inspector A. Museid.

MEKONNEN stated he, along with AMANUEL SAHLE, were part-owners of Piazza Market. He stated that AMANUEL and ESAYAS were his siblings. MEKONNEN stated ESAYAS was a clerk, and not an owner.

I, along with Sergeant D. Day, located, photographed, recovered, and inventoried the following items while conducting the search:

Item #1 (3) 2.95 L Tide laundry detergent on small shelf 20 feet from main door next to second supporting pillar.

Item #2 Open pack of Newport cigarettes containing 7 cigarettes found in an open cash box below the cash register behind the counter.

Item #3 (3) 2.95 L Tide laundry detergent behind counter below battery and phone card rack.

Item #4 (3) 2.95 L Tide laundry detergent at n/w entry to basement.

Item #5 USDA food stamp program permit showing owners: Amare Demissie Alemu, Workineh Mussie Demissie, Ephrem Sahle Mekonnen, and Amanuel Mekonnen Sahle found hanging on wall behind the counter.

Item #6 Pink "Lorillard Buydown Promotion Worksheet" listing Amanuel Sahle as retailer found in black filing cabinet behind counter.

Item #7 (24) cans (13 oz) liquid Similac Advance infant formula expired 11-1-2009 found on lower shelf behind counter.

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Item #8 (11) cans (12.9 oz) Similac Isomil Advance powder expired 6-1-2011 found behind counter on lower shelf.

Item #9 (1) Vipertek brand handheld stungun device packaged in black box found on display shelf near n/w basement door, # X00098645T.

It should be noted that all recovered containers of Tide liquid laundry detergent were marked in the same fashion as listed for this investigation. Three of the containers had "\$9.99" written on the tops of the caps in black marker.

Sergeant Day and I packaged all items and transported them to the SPPD property room where they were turned in as evidence. I downloaded all photos to the secure Media Vault under this case number.

It should be noted that while conducting the search I located numerous items, some of them appearing to be for sale, that were suspect. I photographed some of these items. Among those items were vehicle GPS units, and several computer and televisions. I conducted item checks on serial numbers, and all items were returned clear (i.e. not reported as stolen).

Other items of interest included a large quantity of baggage, purses, and DVDs. The quality of the DVD packaging and graphics appeared poor, possibly indicating counterfeit status.

There were numerous CD stands with numerous copies of the same CD on each stand located behind the counter and marked for sale. Inside an upstairs office connected to the location, there was a workstation with multiple computers, recording devices, blank CDs and DVD discs, and computer equipment that appeared to be used for making multiple copies of digital media. I asked MEKONNEN about the operation. MEKONNEN stated that he and other employees make copies of Ethiopian music from originals, and sell the copies to customers for \$5.00 per CD.

I left a copy of the search warrant and receipt inventory form at 512 N Snelling Avenue before leaving the premises. MEKONNEN took control of the premises upon our departure.

This case will be submitted to the SPCA Office for consideration of conspiracy to commit a misdemeanor crime (receiving stolen property) against AMANUEL and ESAYAS SAHLE pursuant to SS 609.175.2(1).

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**OFFICE DISTRIBUTION**

WEST INVESTIGATIONS

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**PUBLIC NARRATIVE**

Ongoing investigation and execution of a search warrant at 512 N Snelling (Piazza Market) concerning organized retail crimes.