

# Surveillance Video Leads to Conviction of New Bedford Man Connected to String of Westport Robberies

A 39-year-old New Bedford man was convicted last week in Fall River Superior Court of breaking into the same Westport gas station on three separate occasions and was sentenced to serve three years in state prison, District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

Daniel Pedro pleaded guilty to charges of breaking and entering during the nighttime to commit a felony (three counts) and larceny from a building (three counts).

On Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at 11 pm, Westport Gas at 634 American Legion Highway was broken into. Video surveillance showed a male suspect drive into the parking lot in a dark colored GMC Sierra style cab pickup truck. The male exited truck and used a tool to break the window next to the side door. The suspect reached into the hole in the window and unlocked the door, gaining access to the interior of the building. Once inside, the burglar took a large amount of Massachusetts Lottery scratch tickets and a small number of Marlboro cigarettes. The man was shown to be wearing a flannel style jacket with a hood, a baseball hat, and baggy light colored pants with a stripe down the side.

The next day, March 24 at 10:55pm, Westport Gas was broken into again. Video surveillance showed the same GMC pickup pull up near the building in a similar location as the previous break. The same male got out of the truck and appeared to be wearing the same flannel hooded jacket and pants with the stripe down the side. The suspect walked to front of building,

broke the right front window, dropped a scissor jack onto the ground, and entered the building through the front window. He then removed numerous lottery scratch tickets, exited the building out of the side door, and left in the truck.

On Saturday, March 26 at 9:35pm, Westport Gas was broken into a third time. Earlier in the day, Westport Gas had upgraded their surveillance video system. The upgraded video surveillance showed the pickup truck to be a Black GMC Sierra 2500HD extended cab pickup truck. The video showed the suspect used a wood handled hammer to break the left front sliding window of the building. He then entered through the broken window without wearing gloves and left the hammer on the floor inside the building. Police later observed small spots of blood on the broken glass, on a credit card reader, on the side door, and on the backside of a lottery ticket.

Massachusetts State Lottery officials told investigators that several of the stolen scratch tickets were cashed at locations in New Bedford. Video from these stores showed the same male suspect as seen during the breaks.

Westport police sent still images from the videos to New Bedford Police, at which point a sergeant with the New Bedford Police Department recognized the male suspect as Daniel Pedro.

On April 1, 2016, Westport and New Bedford Police arrested the defendant, who was found hiding behind an armoire in a small bedroom of his mother's house in New Bedford. Inside the home, police recognized the flannel hooded jacket and observed that defendant had a bandage on his right index finger and cuts on his right wrist and left knee.

After a brief plea hearing in Fall River Superior Court last week, Judge Raffi Yessayan sentenced the defendant to serve three years to three years and one day in state prison. The judge also placed the defendant on probation for three years and ordered him to pay \$1,400 in restitution to Westport Gas.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Carolyn Morissette.

“This is another example of video surveillance being critical to solving crimes that otherwise go uncharged. I commend the ownership at Westport Gas for upgrading their surveillance system, which greatly assisted us in holding the defendant responsible for these crimes,” District Attorney Quinn said. “This defendant was held accountable for disrupting a business whose employees and ownership are just trying to make a living.”