

NEWS RELEASE



Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office
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Luis A. Valentin, Prosecutor

EAST ORANGE MAN ARRESTED FOR MURDER OF WARETOWN MAN IN NEPTUNE

On January 8, 2010, Wayne A. Wakefield, 28, of East Orange, N.J., was arrested by Detectives from the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and the Neptune Township Police Department for the shooting death of Paris Powell, 23, of Waretown, N.J. The fatal shooting took place during the early morning hours of Wednesday, January 6, 2010, outside a private residence located on Oxonia Avenue in Neptune Township, N.J.

The Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and the Neptune Township Police Department immediately commenced a cooperative investigation into Mr. Powell's death. The investigation culminated in Wakefield's arrest.

Wakefield is charged with one count each of first degree Murder, first degree Felony Murder, first degree Armed Robbery, second degree Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose, and second degree Certain Persons Not to Have Weapons.

If convicted of Murder or Felony Murder, Wakefield faces a maximum potential custodial sentence of a life term of imprisonment and a minimum mandatory sentence of 30 years without eligibility for parole. If convicted of Armed Robbery, Wakefield faces a maximum potential custodial sentence of up to a 20 year State Prison term. If convicted of Possession of a Weapon for an Unlawful Purpose or Certain Persons Not to Have Weapons, Wakefield faces a maximum potential custodial sentence of up to a 10 year State Prison term. The crimes of Murder and Armed Robbery are subject to the provisions of the "No Early Release Act," which means that if convicted, Wakefield must serve 85% of the sentence imposed for those crimes before becoming eligible for release on parole.

Wakefield is being held in lieu of \$2,500,000 bail which was set by Monmouth County Superior Court Judge Thomas F. Scully.

Monmouth County Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin stated, “Despite Wakefield’s arrest, the investigation into Mr. Powell’s death is continuing. Individuals possessing information regarding this crime should contact law enforcement authorities immediately.” Prosecutor Valentin urged all individuals with information regarding Mr. Powell’s death to contact Detective Richard Chapman of the Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office at 1- 800/ 533-7443 and/or Detective Luis Cuevas of the Neptune Township Police Department at 732/ 988-1000.

Despite these charges, every defendant is presumed innocent, unless and until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, following a trial at which the defendant has all of the trial rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and State law.

Released: January 8, 2010