



POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BURLINGTON

MEDIA RELEASE

INCIDENT TYPE:	DATE/TIME REPORTED:	
Unlawful Mischief - Felony	August 9, 2022 at approximately 0502 hours	
INCIDENT NUMBER:	LOCATION:	
22BU014328 (Total of 33 incidents generated)	100 Cherry St, Golden Place, Locust Terrace, Hayward St, and Charlotte St	
INVESTIGATOR:	INVESTIGATOR CONTACT:	
Sgt. Seller (#319)	(802) 540-2319	
AUTHOR:	APPROVED BY:	
Sgt. Michael Henry		
SUSPECT:	AGE:	SUSPECT ADDRESS:
Mbyayenge Mafuta	21	Burlington, VT
SUSPECT DISPOSITION:		
Mbyayenge Mafuta was taken into custody for felony Unlawful Mischief. He is believed to have committed as many as 33 counts of Unlawful Mischief to include misdemeanors and felonies. He is expected to be arraigned in Chittenden County Courthouse later today.		

This is a very complex incident, with dozens of victims and specific incident locations, and the investigation and reporting is in the earliest stages. All information is preliminary and is subject to change as new information develops or additional scenes/incidents are discovered.

NARRATIVE:

On 9 August 2022, at approximately 0502 hours, the Burlington Police Dispatch Center began to receive a large number of 9-1-1 calls in quick succession. Callers described a male suspect throwing objects through multiple residential windows in the area of Golden Place and Locust Terrace. In total, it is estimated that more than twenty 9-1-1 calls were received within a short duration of time, which overwhelmed the two-person call center.

Although the midnight shift had only one non-supervisory officer on duty, the in-progress nature and high volume of these incidents caused the on-duty supervisor to override the [BPD's Modified Priority Response Plan](#). (Under the Priority Response Plan, implemented in May 2021 and revised in May 2022, vandalism is a Priority 3 call that is diverted to online reporting. Prior to May 2021, all calls for service received in-person response, absent extenuating circumstances.) As the officer and supervisor responded to the scene, dispatch continued to receive 9-1-1 calls reporting the suspect smashing windows. Residents exited their homes to

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follow the suspect as he walked down the street, leaving a swath of destruction in his wake. Officers made contact with the suspect in the area of Charlotte Street as he threw a flowerpot through a window. The suspect was taken into custody without further incident.

The suspect was identified as Mbyayenge “Robbie” Mafuta, 21. He is known to police from voluminous prior law enforcement encounters. He has previously been arrested for feloniously assaulting officers, for stealing an occupied vehicle and robbing the occupant—which would commonly be called a carjacking, although our state does not have such a charge—and for burglaries, thefts, vandalism complaints, and trespassing complaints.

Preliminary investigation has revealed approximately 33 residential houses were damaged, many of which had large picture windows shattered. Officers were told that dangerous objects were thrown through windows into rooms where people, including children, were sleeping. Many victims expressed significant fear, recounting that they did not know if someone was attempting to break into their homes. Damage estimates are still being gathered, but preliminary estimates suggests that the aggregate amount will potentially be in the tens of thousands of dollars. Officers interviewed witnesses who identified Mr. Mafuta as the author of this damage.

Additionally, at approximately 0326 hours—i.e., prior to the calls at Golden Place and in The Sisters neighborhood—BPD dispatch received a 9-1-1 call from Green Mountain Transit (GMT) regarding the Downtown Transit Center. The bus station terminal’s window and exterior monitors were reported to have been smashed. As per the Priority Response Plan, the only officer on shift at the time did not respond. Video review has since connected Mr. Mufuta to this crime as well. It is believed that this vandalism caused approximately \$16,000.00 in damage.

“The suspect in this case has now had more than 100 police involvements,” said acting Chief of Police Jon Murad. “Even before this morning’s spate of vandalisms, he had accumulated more than a dozen police involvements since June 1st, more than half of which involved arrest or referrals to alternative justice. Many others involved issues associated with mental health. After one act of vandalism, he called 9-1-1 and reported himself and stated that he had committed the crime because he was ‘off his meds’ and wanted to go to jail. Given the number of people affected by this morning’s spree, I am hopeful Mr. Mafuta can get the help he needs, but it must be done in a way that truly prevents innocent neighbors from being further victimized.”

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Mr. Mafuta's criminal history reveals multiple felony and misdemeanor charges. He has, in the past, failed to appear for judicial summonses. He will appear in Chittenden County Courthouse today to answer to multiple felonies and misdemeanors, and Violation of Court Conditions.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the Burlington Police Department at (802) 658-2704.

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