



# **Aftermath: Alton man talks life after truck stolen and used in chase**

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February 1 2018 6:06 AM







ALTON - Alton resident Timothy Dorris received the surprise of his life last Wednesday, Jan. 24, when he went into Casey's General Store on Broadway and walked outside to find his truck had been stolen.

Dorris admitted he left the keys in the ignition of his truck, and even left it running as he entered the convenience store for what he thought would be a short mission to get a tall can of refreshment. Dorris said the entire trip took approximately three minutes, and he actually witnessed his truck pulling away as he walked out of the store.

"At first I thought it might be a joke, but that quickly passed, and I realized that it most certainly was not," Dorris said. "I was hurt that it happened to me, and kicking myself in the @\$\$ for leaving it running, even though I knew better. You just never think it would happen to you."

Dorris's truck was tracked to Missouri using his phone. He said his parents were able to track the phone until it was discovered in a parking lot with a cracked screen. Dorris said he believed that lot was where St. Louis County Police began their pursuit of the man who stole his truck in a strip mall on Parker Road.

"After phone was found, my brother and I went to the county police department to see if they could help," Dorris said. "An officer told us he had heard about a chase with what was possibly my truck on the radio, and by that time, he had already wrecked it."

Police identified the suspect in the theft as Nicholas Settles, who has since been charged with aggravated fleeing and thefts related to a motor vehicle. His bond was set at \$75,000 following that pursuit, which went from St. Louis until its climactic conclusion at "The Islands" area of East Alton, near Broadway in Alton.



Dorris's truck allegedly rammed two St. Louis County Police cruisers and one Alton Police Cruiser after running through two sets of spike strips deployed from Wood River and Alton Police Departments.

All of this was awful news to Dorris, who realized at that time he had neglected to transfer his insurance to that particular vehicle.

"That made me feel worse - not knowing how bad it was wrecked," he said. "This truck is all I have to get me around, but at least I knew it was back in Illinois, and someone had been caught. I had insurance on my low-rider, but apparently forgot to switch it over - so little did I know I didn't have insurance, which was just another kick in ."

So, Dorris found himself with a busted truck and no insurance. A representative of State Farm Insurance said insurance coverage does cover damage incurred through vehicle theft. She said such cases can often be difficult, and sometimes it is difficult to estimate the total damage tally. Even with insurance, vehicle theft can be a major hassle - but without it, Dorris quickly learned it was a costly one.

"Fred's towed it from the accident to the lot for \$250, being it was an emergency tow, and it was \$100 to get it back to my place," he said. "Fred's didn't charge me for storage, so I saved a whopping \$40."

Dorris said he is on a limited income, and could not afford such unexpected issues. He said he is grateful the police caught someone and charged him in relation to the theft of his truck, but said that did not help with the \$600-\$1,000 required in truck parts to repair his vehicle.

"I feel stupid and heartbroken for having more faith in humanity, but knowing justice will be served is a help," he said. "The state did send me a form to fill out for the damages to my property, and from what I get, they are trying to stick the bill on him."

The truck needs a new control arm and spindle, and has two bent rims. He said the truck only had four gallons of gas in it when it was stolen.

Dorris has created a GoFundMe to help repair his truck, which is his only method of transportation. As of now, nearly \$300 of his \$1,500 goal has been raised. That page can be found [here](#).