

"The Older, the Better": Collinsville Man Accused of Burglarizing Bethalto Senior Citizens

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Jason A. Mitchell age 36

BETHALTO - “The older, the better” Bethalto Police Chief Craig Welch said of a man charged with burglarizing folks after providing false identity.

Jason A. Mitchell, 36, of the 200 block of West Woodcrest Drive in Collinsville was charged with three counts of residential burglary in Bethalto following an investigation by the village's police on April 11. That investigation began when a village resident told police an unknown white male contacted him claiming to be a home inspector. After the person allowed Mitchell entry, he told police he discovered the contents of his wallet were missing.

The victim's debit card was among the contents of that wallet and Welch said the department was able to track the activity on that card while also reviewing surveillance footage from businesses in Troy, Wood River and East St. Louis, which allegedly showed Mitchell using that card.

Once Mitchell was identified by police, Welch tied him to a similar incident in March 2019 in Bethalto. On that occasion police were told Mitchell was accompanied by a female subject who has yet to be identified. The ongoing investigation also revealed another incident on April 13, 2019, in which an unknown white male matching Mitchell's description made entry through deception. The resident in that case reported jewelry to be missing.

When asked if those three victims were the only ones, Welch said it was likely Mitchell had a history of burglarizing people – especially senior citizens – through similar deceptive means.

“He's currently in jail in St. Clair County and violated his parole,” Welch said. “This is pretty much what criminals do. They come in and say they're there with the city or something, and once they gain entry they proceed to burglarize people. With people like this, the older, the better as far as their victims are concerned.”

Welch said the investigation is still ongoing and invites anyone with further information on Mitchell as well as the possible female accomplice to contact the Bethalto Police Department at (618) 377-5266.