



HERCULES POLICE DEPARTMENT
PRESS RELEASE

TYPE OF INCIDENT Craigslist Rental Fraud		CASE NUMBER H14-10107	
DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT Tuesday August 5, 2014		LOCATION OF INCIDENT 1900 Block of Pheasant Dr, Hercules	
VICTIM		AGE	CITY
RESPONSIBLE Gino Eckstein		AGE 21	CITY San Francisco
ARRESTED? Yes	CHARGE Residential Burglary; Possession of Stolen Property; Renting Property Under False Pretenses; Identity Theft; and Committing a Felony While out on Bail for Another Felony		BAIL \$395,000

SUMMARY

On August 5, 2014 at 10:28 a.m. an officer took a report of a possible fraud involving a house for rent. The victim said she recently responded to an online Craigslist ad for a house for rent in the 1900 block of Pheasant Dr. On August 4, 2014, the victim met an Asian/White male adult at the house. The suspect told the victim his name was Eric and he was managing the investment property for his father. The suspect allowed the victim access to the home so she could view it. The victim told the suspect she was interested in renting the home. The suspect had the victim fill out a credit application and give it to him. The suspect said the reporting party would also need to provide \$1,500 cash, or cashier's check, for a security deposit. The victim agreed to give the suspect a deposit at a later time. The victim told a friend, who is a real estate agent, about the house she was planning to rent. The friend told the victim the house is currently for sale, and it was unlikely the house was up for rent. The reporting party contacted the Hercules Police, believing she was the victim of a real estate scam.

The reporting officer determined the house is currently listed for sale, from a licensed Realtor. The property owner just accepted a buyer's offer August 4, 2014. The officer found a sign post, in the front yard, but there was no for sale sign hanging from the post. The victim agreed to assist Hercules Police to attempt to apprehend the suspect. The victim arranged a meeting with the suspect, for Tuesday evening, to pay him the \$1,500 security deposit. The meeting was to take place at the house on Pheasant Dr.

On August 5, 2014, at approximately 8:30pm, officers staked out the house in the 1900 block of Pheasant Dr. The suspect drove up and parked his car across the street from the house. The suspect drove off, prior to the victim's arrival. The suspect vehicle was stopped for a traffic violation. The victim positively identified the driver as the male who fraudulently agreed to rent her the house on Pheasant Dr. Officer's located the "For Sale Sign", which had been in front of the house, in the back seat of the suspect's vehicle. Officers found "For Sale" flyers, and the plastic display box the Realtor placed inside the house, in the suspect's car. The suspect also had completed rental agreements from four different victims.

21 year old Gino Eckstein, of San Francisco, was arrested and charged with Residential Burglary; Possession of Stolen Property; Renting Property Under False Pretenses; and Identity Theft. It was later determined Eckstein is currently out on bail, for Felony Charges, in San Francisco. An enhancement was added for that charge. He was transported to the Martinez Detention Facility.

Another victim contacted the Hercules Police on August 5, 2014. She also replied to the Craigslist ad for the house in the 1900 block of Pheasant Dr. This victim also filled out a credit application, and gave it to a person matching the description of the suspect described by the first victim. The suspect asked this victim to meet him Tuesday night, in Richmond, to give him the \$1,500 security deposit. That meeting did not take place.

Officers believe there maybe additional victim's of this "Rental Scam". If you answered a Craigslist ad, and had contact with an "Eric ", or an Eric Stegner, about renting a house, please contact the Hercules Police Department, Detective Pesmark, at 510-799-8223; or Dispatch at 510-724-1111.



<p>PREPARED BY Connie Van Putten, Reserve Detective and PIO Desk: 510-799-8268 Cell: 510-221-1052</p>	<p>DATE 08-06-2014</p>
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