

HANOVER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE
COLONEL DAVID R. HINES, SHERIFF

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mechanicsville Retailer Arrested for Distribution of Synthetic Marijuana

On Friday, April 8, 2011, Investigators with the Hanover County Sheriff's Office charged Nargis A. Odhwani, a 55-year-old female of the 5800 block of Lauren Trail in Midlothian and Rahal Y. Atiyeh, a 23-year-old male of the 2700 block of Seminary Avenue in Richmond, for distribution of synthetic marijuana, also known as "Spice." Odhwani is the owner of the D-H Food Mart/Valero gas station at 7119 Mechanicsville Turnpike. Atiyeh is a merchandise contractor for the store. Both Odhwani and Atiyeh have been released on a bond. Odhwani is scheduled to appear in Hanover General District Court on April 19. Atiyeh's court appearance is scheduled for April 15.

Investigators began an investigation on April 6 into the sale of Spice at the business after a juvenile received treatment at a local hospital for ingesting Spice that was reportedly purchased at the D-H Food Mart. A uniformed officer entered the business on April 7, did not observe any Spice openly displayed and confirmed that the business was aware of the new legislation regarding synthetic marijuana. After this visit undercover Investigators were still able to make purchases. A search warrant was executed at the business on April 8, 2011 that resulted in the recovery of additional Spice. Investigators are continuing their investigation and additional charges are pending.

"Our community has been dealing with the health consequences of Spice for some time and we were pleased when the legislation was signed on March 23 to make the sale and possession of synthetic marijuana illegal. The Sheriff's Office has been diligent on informing our retailers of this new law and the consequences if violated. This particular business operated in very close proximity to two schools and despite knowledge of the law, operated without regard to the welfare of our youngest of citizens. The Sheriff's Office will continue its efforts to identify, apprehend, and, with the cooperation of our Commonwealth Attorney, prosecute those responsible for distributing Spice just like any other illegal drug," said Colonel David R. Hines.



Nargis A. Odhwani



Rahal Y. Atiyeh

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"CONTINUING TO BE A PART OF, NOT APART FROM, THE COMMUNITY"