



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
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**AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCE ARREST AND FILING OF CHARGES
IN SERIAL RAPIST COLD CASE WITH CRIMES DATING BACK TO 1996**

RIVERSIDE – District Attorney Mike Hestrin, joined by Corona Police Chief George Johnstone and Riverside Police Chief Larry Gonzalez, announced today, June 17, 2020, that a cold case serial rapist and sex offender has been arrested and charged with crimes dating back almost 25 years.

Darin Edward Cooke, DOB: 11-7-69, has been charged by the DA's Office with 16 felony counts including the forcible rape of five separate victims. Cooke has been charged with six counts of forcible rape, four counts of forcible oral copulation, three counts of assault with the intent to commit rape or oral copulation during a first-degree burglary, two counts of kidnap with the intent to commit rape or oral copulation, and one count of forcible sexual penetration. Each of the 16 counts carries a potential life sentence if convicted.

Counts 1-11 involve crimes occurring in the city of Riverside in 1996 and 1998 and counts 12-16 involve crimes occurring in the city of Corona in 2007. There are a total of six victims, five of whom were forcibly raped. Either a knife or a handgun was used by the suspect in all the charged crimes.

Cooke was arrested on May 26, 2020, in Prescott, Arizona. He was residing in Chino Valley, Arizona at the time of his arrest and has been living in Arizona for several years. The arrest was a combined effort involving the Corona and Riverside police departments, the Yavapai County (Arizona) Sheriff's Office, and the FBI Phoenix Violent Crimes Task Force which is made up of the Phoenix, Peoria, and Scottsdale police departments; the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office; the Maricopa County District Attorney's Office; and the FBI.

Cooke was then extradited to California on June 14, 2020, and is scheduled to be video arraigned today, June 17, 2020, at 11:30 a.m. in Dept. 42 at the Hall of Justice in Riverside.

"We appreciate the great work done by our partners at the Corona and Riverside police departments and the FBI in identifying and locating this serial rapist," District Attorney Mike Hestrin said. "But it is most important to keep in mind the victims of this serial rapist. Because of the diligent work by law enforcement, the victims of these horrible crimes may now rightly hope—even though it has been many years—that we will finally be able to bring them justice."

"I am incredibly proud of our Corona PD investigative team's initiative and tenacity, who, even during these trying times, never forgot the victims of these horrific crimes," Corona Police Chief George Johnstone said.

"The investigative work done by all the agencies involved demonstrated the persistence and determination to get these heinous crimes solved," said Riverside Police Chief Larry Gonzalez. "But the work continues as our focus turns to supporting the victims while they help in the goal of a successful prosecution."

In 2015, based on DNA evidence collected by police from crime scenes or from victims in the Riverside and Corona cases, a Riverside police detective submitted a declaration in support of an arrest warrant for the DNA profile of a "John Doe". A criminal complaint on that same "John Doe" DNA profile was filed by the DA's Office.

In early 2019, Corona police started looking into several sexual assault cold cases and contacted Riverside police detectives due to several such cases happening in both cities. Detectives found there was a DNA match between Corona and Riverside cases.

With the assistance of the FBI Los Angeles Forensic Genetic Genealogy Team, subsequent investigation led to the preliminary identification of Darin Edward Cooke as the suspect with the "John Doe" DNA profile.

A surveillance of Cooke's Arizona residence - where he was the only male occupant -- was conducted and investigators collected trash bags from the home, which were examined for DNA. A DNA profile was generated that matched the DNA profile of the "John Doe" in the filed criminal case involving the crimes in Riverside and Corona.

The case, RIF1502192, is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Michael Kersse of the DA's Cold Case Unit and Deputy District Attorney Kimberly DeGonia of the DA's Homicide Unit.

The investigation is ongoing, and investigators are continuing to follow up on any other unfiled crimes that may involve this defendant.

If anyone believes they also may have been a victim of the defendant charged in this case, please contact Supervising DA Investigator Ryan Bodmer at (951) 955-5400.

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