

STEARNS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE – March 30, 2005

The Stearns County SO is requesting help from the public with identifying property officers believe is stolen. The property includes normal household items such as engine parts, tools, jumper cables and a number of tree trimming tools. However, the property also includes a number of very collectible items, such as model cars, model trains, and tractors. These include Hot Wheels and Matchbox cars.

During February of 2004 the Sheriff's Office received a call from a resident of Lynden Twp of Stearns County. The caller had a great deal of property left at her home by a male who stayed there periodically. The caller asked Law Enforcement to remove the items from her home.

After talking with the caller and because of the criminal record for the suspect officers believed the property was stolen. At the time, there was a warrant for the subject and officers were not able to interview that suspect.

The property was picked up from the caller and brought to the Sheriff's evidence room. The Sheriff's Office has used numerous computer databases, and reviewed this case with neighboring law enforcement agencies. However, we have not been able to identify a report of theft, which would be the source for these items.

Since the recovery of these items, the suspect has been arrested for the outstanding warrants and other theft related crimes. He has been sentenced for these unrelated crimes and is currently incarcerated in a state correctional facility. The subject is not willing to assist officers in returning the property to the rightful owners. In fact he claims the property is not stolen.

We continue to believe these items are stolen property. Because of the unique nature of the items, they are often difficult to describe in a computer entry and therefore may be difficult to query upon recovery. Therefore we are asking for the public's help in determining if this property is stolen.

We are looking for persons who may have information about these items. We would especially like to hear from persons in Central Minnesota who may have been the victim of an unsolved theft involving collectible model cars, including Matchbox and Hot Wheels.

Another item of interest is a small collectible (possibly antique) fire extinguisher.

Anyone who has been a victim of such a theft should contact the Sheriff's Department @ 320-259-3734. Victims should provide the Sheriff's Department with the name of the police agency where their theft is documented, along with the case number and date of report if available. If the theft has not been previously reported to police, the caller should be prepared to provide a detailed description of their property and an explanation on why it had not been reported.

