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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: February 1, 2010

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Dennis Eugene Woodral Jr  
Auto Thief Sentenced to  
6 Years Prison

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Dennis Eugene Woodral Jr, age 27, of Modesto, was convicted of auto theft. Woodral also admitted a prior auto theft conviction from April 2003 as well as a conviction for assault with a deadly weapon, a “strike” under California’s “Three Strikes” law, from May 2001 out of Yuba County. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On November 27, 2009 at approximately 10:00 a.m., officers located a parked 1988 red Chevrolet Camaro in an alleyway near Colorado Avenue and Avalon Avenue in Modesto. The car had been reported stolen the day before from the owner’s driveway in Modesto. After the owner arrived at the scene, the officers released the vehicle to her. The victim then walked to the nearest cross street and waited for a tow truck to arrive to transport the vehicle. When the victim returned, her vehicle was gone. The victim then called the police to report her vehicle stolen again. At approximately 2:30 p.m. in the area of Leon Avenue and Avalon Avenue in Modesto, an officer again observed the stolen vehicle but observed Woodral driving it this time. When Woodral saw the officer behind him he tried to accelerate away but lost control and crashed the car. When Woodral was arrested, officers located an empty syringe on him. Woodral claimed that he had parked the car in the alley near his house hours before but did not know the police had been at the scene earlier that morning or that the owner had called for the car to be towed. Woodral also stated that he stole the car because he needed a ride home after using “a lot of dope”.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Linda McFadden sentenced Woodral to six years in prison.

Stanislaus County residents can report suspected vehicle theft activity to their local law enforcement agency or contact the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (STANCATT) at: (209) 545-7316.

**IF YOU OBSERVE A THEFT IN PROGRESS, DIAL 911**

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