



Weather drawing by Tera Camp, Wilmington

Temps in 40s

A 50 percent chance of showers early this morning, otherwise partly sunny. Highs in the lower 40s.

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WILMINGTON News

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Suspicious car call turns up meth lab

WILMINGTON

Minimum sentence four years for couple

By **BRANDON SMITH**
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Who would want to consume a substance made with any of these ingredients: carburetor cleaner, chemical driveway ice melter, cooking stove fuel, drain cleaner, farm fertilizer and hydrochloric acid — sometimes used to melt sealers off concrete

floors?

“It’s absolute poison,” said Chief Detective Josh Riley of the Wilmington Police Department.

Despite its ingredients, methamphetamine is highly addictive and has a propensity to be used as an illegal stimulant. Wilmington police say it was being manufactured at 708 Rombach Ave.

Police won’t know how much finished meth was found at the site until the Miami Valley

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Robert Allen



Lisa Tucker



Clarence Tucker

METH

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Regional Crime Lab reports an official weight.

According to Riley, it was a small operation compared to others discovered in Clinton County in recent years, "but it was an operation," he said.

The investigation began when a Wilmington resident noticed a suspicious car in the 100 block of Newham Street and called police around 12:15 a.m. Tuesday.

Police went to watch the car, that allegedly ran the stop sign at Newham and Rombach, prompting a traffic stop. To stop, the car pulled into the driveway of the driver's home at 708 Rombach Ave.

While officer Michael Earley

approached the driver's side of the car, officer Scott Baker went to the passenger's side and noticed something peculiar. The passenger, Robert W. Allen, 41, of Brookville, was putting on gloves with weights in the fingers.

"Basically lead boxing gloves," Riley called them. "When he realized what this guy was doing, it was kind of a shock." For this, Allen received a charge of possessing concealed weapons.

The situation continued to escalate for the individuals in the car, including the driver, Clarence F. Tucker, 35, of Wilmington.

Officers Earley and Baker spotted small used car parts in the car, according to Detective Riley. When asked, Allen and Tucker "pretty much" gave an admission to stealing them from

the salvage yard near where their car had been parked. For this alleged offense, Allen and Tucker were charged with one count each of breaking and entering and possession of criminal tools, specifically those tools used to remove the car parts.

This discovery prompted a search of the car, which yielded what was believed to be samples of finished meth, as well as partly-empty cans of liquid campfire cooking fuel, a popular meth ingredient.

At some time during the investigation, according to a press release, Tucker's wife Lisa L. Tucker, 40, came out of their house and acted "disorderly" and "confrontational." When she fled into the house, the release stated, police took her into custody.

Lisa and Clarence Tucker were eventually charged with



Contributed photo

Confiscated materials litter the driveway behind police lines on Rombach Avenue.

manufacturing meth. That's a felony of the most serious degree, the first, and it carries a minimum prison sentence of four years.

The charges against Clarence Tucker and Robert Allen, stemming from the car parts theft, are punishable by up to two years in prison, police said. Riley said

the parts were intended to be used on cars the two men owned.

Lisa Tucker has been charged with obstructing official business and resisting arrest. Clarence Tucker faces charges of breaking and entering, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of criminal tools for use in a felony, while Allen is charged with breaking and entering, carrying concealed weapons and possession of criminal tools for use in a felony.

Discovering the lab "was a heck of a job by those guys,"

Detective Riley said about officers Earley and Baker.

And the incident underscores the importance of complaints from ordinary people, he said.

"If you see something odd, absolutely call us. Somebody took the time to do that. ... One thing led to another, that led to another, and we busted a meth lab, all because somebody called about a weird car at the end of the street," Riley said.

"Hats off to the person who called. We need more of those calls, and we will respond to every one of them," he said.

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How to spot a possible meth lab

According to the Web site of the Warren County Drug Task Force, the agency that helped process the scene Tuesday, the following are indications of a possible meth lab:

- Frequent visitors at all times of the day or night — persons carrying in boxes with excessive amounts of glassware, containers, tubing and so on.
- Frequent late night activity.
- Chemical odors coming from their houses, garbage or detached buildings.
- Paranoid behavior and/or extensive security.
- People appearing secretive about their activities.
- Unemployed yet pay bills with cash.
- Coming outside to smoke cigarettes.
- Windows blackened out or curtains always drawn.
- Burn garbage on property or set their garbage in another neighbor's collection area.

"Alone, any of these activities or signs may not mean that methamphetamine manufacturing is occurring. However, some or several of them happening together may indicate a problem," the Web site states.

Additional educational materials can be found at www.wcdtf.org.