

Two Bend Men Arrested in Laughing Gas Theft

by Cheryl McDermott

Two men were arrested early Friday morning on theft, burglary, and conspiracy charges when they were caught allegedly stealing a large canister of nitrous oxide -- commonly known as "laughing gas" -- from a northeast Bend dental office, said police.

According to Sgt. Dan Ritchie with Bend Police, officers responded to an alarm originating from the nitrous oxide room of Cascade Endodontic Services at 1590 NE Williamson Boulevard about 12:45 a.m. November 24.

One officer in the immediate vicinity saw a vehicle occupied by two men leaving the area and initiated a traffic stop, finding a large canister of the gas in the back of the vehicle, Sgt. Ritchie wrote in a news release.

Officers responding to the dental office determined that forced entry had been gained, and, according to Sgt. Ritchie, found evidence at the scene that connected the two men to the burglary and theft of the nitrous oxide.

Christian Patrick Haslam, 33, and Zachary Sheldon Williams, 27, both residents of Bend, were arrested and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail.

They will face charges of second-degree burglary, first-degree theft, and conspiracy.

Nitrous oxide is used for dental and medical purposes as an anesthetic or analgesic, and is commonly known as "laughing gas" due to the euphoric effects it produces when it is inhaled. It is also used as an oxidizer in internal combustion engines.

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