



\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

Captain Neil Weaver  
Government and Media Relations

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**Trooper Jeff Sevigney - Spokane**

Jeff.Sevigney@wsp.wa.gov

509-993-2946

@wspd4pio

**Spokane Regional Auto Theft Task Force Makes Arrest**

**Spokane – The Spokane Regional Auto Theft Task Force (SRATTF) consisting of detectives of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and the Spokane Police Department (SPD), arrested a Vehicle Theft Suspect who a WSP Trooper observed days prior traveling in excess of 130 mph in a posted 30 mph zone on Division Street in the City of Spokane.**

The investigation started in the early morning hours on November 29, 2020, when a WSP Trooper spotted a vehicle travelling at a high rate of speed on Division Street. The trooper checked the vehicle's speed through radar, which revealed the vehicle's speed to be in excess of 100 mph in a posted 30 mph zone. The trooper attempted to stop the recklessly driven vehicle, which fled from the trooper at speeds in excess of 130 mph. A short time later, the WSP located the fleeing vehicle abandoned and un-occupied in the Gonzaga Area, and the vehicle's driver and passenger had fled the area on foot. The investigation revealed the vehicle had been stolen on the evening of November 28<sup>th</sup>, while the victim was at work. Within less than four hours following the victim's vehicle being stolen, the vehicle sustained thousands of dollars in damage.

SRATTF detectives took over the investigation, and on December 3, 2020, arrested 18 year old Anthony P. Statton of Spokane, for Theft of a Motor Vehicle and for Felony Eluding. During the investigation, Statton was also determined to be one of the suspects who had vandalized Christmas Trees in downtown Spokane (*this crime is currently under investigation by the SPD*).

At the time of the arrest, Statton was out on bond related to multiple assault charges from an incident on October 19, 2020 where he was arrested for throwing rocks at construction workers.

*The following agencies, units, and departments, deserve recognition and played a valuable role during this investigation: WSP; SPD (Downtown Precinct; and PACT (Patrol Anti – Crime Team); Security at the Spokane Transit Authority; and City of Spokane Park Rangers.*

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