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PHILADELPHIA DRUG TRAFFICKER ARRESTED FOLLOWING OVERDOSE DEATH IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY



EDWIN V. RODRIGUEZ

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (June 12, 2020) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Abington Township Police Chief Patrick Malloy announced today the arrest of Edwin V. Rodriguez, 37, of the Lawncrest section of Philadelphia, on charges related to trafficking heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana and multiple types of pills, as well as other charges.

The investigation into Rodriguez began following the overdose death of 36-year-old Patrick Cumiskey at his residence in Abington Township on April 13, 2020. Abington Township Police and Second Alarmers Rescue Squad responded to the home at 5:31 p.m., but Cumiskey could not be revived and was pronounced dead. An investigation by the Montgomery County Detective Bureau Narcotics Enforcement Team, Abington Police Department and the Philadelphia Police Narcotics Unit IDIS was launched, and it was determined through video surveillance and cell phone communications that

Cumiskey had purchased illegal drugs from Rodriguez earlier that day as well as at other times.

Detectives conducted in-person surveillance on the defendant as well as used cell phone data to establish multiple drug transactions where Rodriguez sold drugs to individuals before and after Cuminsky's death. On April 21, 2020, a search warrant was executed on Rodriguez residence at 233 Benner Street in Philadelphia. From his person, residence and vehicle, law enforcement found approximately 555 baggies of fentanyl/heroin, 120 vials of methamphetamine, 80 grams of crack cocaine, two pounds of marijuana and multiple pills. Two firearms, ammunition, a variety of drug packaging materials and \$7,994 were also collected.

"In the last four years, we have investigated more than 450 overdose deaths, looking to connect the dealer who sold the drugs that caused someone's death. In a number of these cases, we have charged the dealer with Drug Delivery Resulting in Death, but in some cases, due to multiple drugs in the victim's body, we were unable to sustain that charge," said Steele. "However, Mr. Cumiskey's death led us to a significant drug trafficker, who is now facing multiple serious felonies and serious jail time."

Rodriguez is charged with 12 counts of Possession with Intent to Deliver, Aggravated Assault, Simple Assault, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia and Criminal Use of a Communications Facility. He was arraigned on April 22, 2020 before Magisterial District Judge Greg Scott, who set bail at \$250,000 cash. Rodriguez was unable to post bail and was remanded to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. The defendant waived his preliminary hearing.

"We need to make sure that those suffering from substance use disorder get the help they need. At the same time, we are committed to continuing to investigate and arrest these dealers who are profiting by selling these deadly drugs," said Steele. "We hope and pray our efforts will limit the number of people getting addicted to these drugs and the deaths being caused by them. Too many families are suffering from the loss of loved ones. It's got to stop."

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.