

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

SALINAS MEN SENTENCED TO STATE PRISON FOR RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY THAT CONCLUDED IN GUNFIRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Lindsey K. O'Shea
Deputy District Attorney
(831) 755-5251

Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Johnny Noel Rivera, age 19 and Gustavo Garcia Torres, age 25, residents of Salinas, pled no contest to charges stemming from a residential burglary that the two men committed earlier this year.

On April 11, 2016, Rivera and Torres, along with two other males, drove around a Salinas neighborhood, looking for empty houses. Rivera dropped Torres and the two other men off at a house that did not have any cars parked in the driveway. Rivera remained with the car as Torres and the others jumped a fence to access the backyard of the residence. While in the backyard, one of the men tried to open one of the locked windows with a screwdriver, but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Torres and the other men gave up on breaking into the house; but, just when they were jumping the fence again to leave the backyard, they were spotted by a neighbor who noticed the suspicious activity. Torres ran to Rivera's car, got in the front passenger's seat, and Rivera drove off, however, the neighbor followed them in his car, while calling for police assistance. Rivera eventually stopped his car in the area of Woodside Drive and Woodside Circle and Torres got out, with a gun in hand, and fired a shot at the neighbor's car. Fearing for his safety, the neighbor abandoned his pursuit of Rivera and Torres, but not before reporting the license plate number of Rivera's vehicle, which ultimately led to the capture of the two men.

On today's date Torres pled no contest to shooting at an occupied vehicle and he will receive 10 years in state prison for his crime. Rivera pled no contest to residential

burglary and he will be sentenced to 4 years in state prison. The two men remain in custody and are scheduled to be sentenced before the Honorable Pamela L. Butler on February 1, 2017.

This case was investigated by Salinas Police Detective David Poulin and Monterey County District Attorney Investigator Peter Austen.