



# PRESS RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE DMV NEWS FROM THE DMV

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September 18, 2008

## DMV INVESTIGATORS ARREST THREE SUSPECTS INVOLVED IN DOWNEY MOTORCARS GRAND THEFT SCHEME

**Sacramento**—Investigators from the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Artesia Investigations Office on Tuesday arrested former employees and associates of Downey Motorcars and South Gate Motorcars on several felony counts of grand theft, identity theft, and filing false financial statements.

Marisela Alvarez, 34, of Glendora, Joel Rodriguez, 43 of Downey and Leticia Medrano, 34 of Moreno Valley were all arrested and booked into the Los Angeles County Jail on arrest warrants issued by Los Angeles Superior Court.

Alvarez and Rodriguez were arrested on Tuesday, with bail set between \$1 million and \$3 million. All three suspects allegedly defrauded customers by processing fraudulent loan applications utilizing stolen identities, reselling and double financing many of the same vehicles and defrauding 21 financial institutions.

The arrests are the result of a DMV investigation that turned up numerous violations and consumer complaints following the closure of the dealership in January 2006. DMV estimates that more than \$5 million in auto and real estate loan proceeds were procured fraudulently.

**Editor's Note:** Commander Stephanie Wheaton, Supervising Investigator at DMV's Artesia Investigations Office, is available for interviews. She can be contacted at (562) 403-2221.

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