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Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit

News Release

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Repeat Offender Found Guilty of First Degree Burglary

Moncks Corner, S.C. – Solicitor Scarlett Wilson announced that a Berkeley County jury has found a South Carolina man guilty of Burglary in the First degree on Friday. The Defendant, James Elton Riles, had ten prior convictions for Burglary in South Carolina and Georgia. Judge Deadre L. Jefferson sentenced Riles to the minimum fifteen years in prison. Solicitor Wilson stated, “Once again, the community stepped up and helped us and the Sheriff Lewis’ Office get the evidence we needed to prove the case. Repeat offenders need to get the message that our community is sick of this.”

On October 20, 2021, Defendant James Elton Riles, entered the garage of a homeowner in the Devon Forest neighborhood of Goose Creek on a mission to steal. He left the residence with two chain saws and was seen on home surveillance footage fleeing the area. The Berkeley County Sheriff’s Office investigated the matter and was able to make a positive identification of Riles with help from community tips after the homeowner posted the footage to social media.

Assistant Solicitor, Kawohi Morris praised Detective Brian Keefer with the Berkeley County Sheriff’s Office for a thorough investigation that removed a repeat offender from the street: “Detective Keefer’s dedication to proving beyond a reasonable doubt Riles’ identity from the surveillance video was essential to the guilty verdict.” Assistant Solicitors Kawohi Morris and Adam Carr prosecuted the case.

At the time of the trial, the Defendant was serving a sentence in the Georgia Department of Corrections after a probation violation for burglaries committed in Georgia. The Defendant was previously convicted of 4 counts of Grand Larceny, 2 counts of Fraudulent Check, Breach of Trust, Failure to Stop for Blue Light, Defrauding Hotel, Shoplifting, Forgery, Financial Transaction Card Fraud, and Theft by Taking.

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