

Police: License Plate Violations Lead to Drug Arrest

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A green Volkswagen without a front license plate and a rear plate "not on file" was spotted by a Darien police officer, which led to the driver being stopped and, ultimately, arrested on a drug possession charge, police said.

Police described what happened with this account, including accusations not proven in court:

At about 3:57 p.m., Sunday Oct. 8, the officer saw the vehicle being driven east somewhere on Middlesex Road. It is illegal to drive without a front license plate in Connecticut. The officer checked out the license plate number from the rear plate and found it wasn't on file. The officer conducted a traffic stop.

The driver, Vito Badalamente, 47, of Bridgeport, initially told the officer that the car belonged to a friend, and he had no paperwork for it. Later, he told police that he was in the process of buying it from the owner.

Police found Badalamente had a past history of failing to appear in court, so when he was charged with failing to properly display a license plate and improper use of a license plate, he was placed under arrest.

But his trouble wasn't over: While he was searched at the scene, an officer found two small, white rock-like substances in one of his pockets. Badalamente admitted that the substances were both crack cocaine. A field test also indicated they were cocaine.

Badalamente was additionally charged with drug possession. He is scheduled to appear Wednesday, Oct. 18 in state Superior Court in Stamford. His bond was set at \$2,500, which he paid through a bail bondsman. The vehicle was towed.