

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



THOMAS J. SPOTA
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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Witness in 2010 homicide pleads guilty to two counts of perjury

A 38 year old Shirley man pleaded guilty today to two counts of perjury in the first degree for lying on the witness stand during the pretrial hearing and trial of Shawn Lawrence, a Massapequa man convicted last year of the murder of an Amityville man and the attempted murder of two other men during a confrontation in the Andress Plaza housing complex parking lot in North Amityville in January of 2010.

Tariq Burwell admitted during his plea that police detectives were telling the truth and that he had lied about giving and signing statements identifying Shawn Lawrence as a suspect and describing what happened the night of January 12, 2010 when Lawrence and another man fired shots into a van killing James Terry, 44, and wounding David Hodges of Copiague and Ralph Council of North Amityville.

A jury last May convicted Lawrence of murder in the second degree and two counts of attempted murder. He is serving a prison term of 75 years to life in state prison.

“The crime of Perjury is particularly offensive because it jeopardizes justice and getting a verdict based on the facts,” District Attorney Thomas Spota said. “Everything depends on the jury getting accurate information and that’s why lying under oath is a serious felony.”

District Attorney Spota said the sentencing recommendation at Burwell’s March 14 sentencing will be two to four years’ incarceration in an upstate correctional facility.

SCDA COMMUNICATIONS



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A criminal charge is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.