

Cellphone tracking led deputies to Peninsula hills stabbing suspect.
Suspect Malik Dosouqi had disposable cellphone, DA says.

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About 24 hours after a San Mateo County sheriff's deputy found a taxi driver brutally stabbed to death along Skyline Boulevard last week, investigators tracking a cellphone linked to the killing noticed it had returned to the remote, wooded area of the crime scene.

The detectives, who had a warrant to follow the cellphone, sent deputies back to the area late that night to look for it, San Mateo County District Attorney Steven Wagstaffe said.

There they discovered a mortally wounded tow truck driver calling for help — the second person apparently targeted at random and stabbed to death in the normally idyllic hills west of Woodside on consecutive nights.

The suspect, 26-year-old Malik Dosouqi of Pacifica, drove a car toward them as they went to help 31-year-old John Pekiaki, who later died at the scene, authorities have said. One deputy fired at the car. Though Dosouqi was not shot, he crashed the car moments later and was arrested.

Investigators had not previously detailed why the deputies returned to the original crime scene to look for evidence on the night of June 18, hours after they'd wrapped up an intensive search of the area that morning and early afternoon.

"We had obtained a search warrant and were following up on the location of a cellphone," Wagstaffe said in an interview.

The district attorney said Dosouqi had multiple cellphones when he was arrested, including a "disposable" one.

A spokeswoman for the sheriff's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Wagstaffe declined to say which phone the sheriff's office was tracking or how it was connected to the first killing, in which authorities say Dosouqi stabbed 32-year-old Abdulmalek Nagi Nasher to death. The search warrant investigators obtained for the phone has been sealed.

Family members said Nasher disappeared after a customer called him requesting a ride from El Granada to Santa Cruz.

Prosecutors have charged Dosouqi with two counts each of murder, using a deadly weapon and inflicting great bodily injury for the killings of Nasher and Pecipaki.

Dosouqi said in a jailhouse interview with ABC7 last week that he is innocent; his attorney did not return a call for comment Thursday. Dosouqi, who made his first appearance in court Monday, is scheduled to enter a plea to the charges on July 8.

The tracking technology authorities used can determine a phone's general location based on how close it is to nearby cell service towers.

"It gives you a range, you're looking all over for it," Wagstaffe said. "It doesn't take you right to the spot immediately."

Deputies were dispatched to the crime scene at 11 p.m. on June 18. They found Pecipaki, who had been sent to the area after someone called his towing company claiming to be a stranded motorist, nearly an hour later.

Investigators have declined to release Dosouqi's booking photo from the jail where he is being held as they talk with witnesses who may have seen him before or after the first killing. They are still piecing together what Dosouqi did between the two killings, Wagstaffe said.

"Our investigators are making headway on that," Wagstaffe said.