

# Sheriff

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## Media Release

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## Wildwood Trucker Arrested in Series of Truck Stop Burglaries

Wildwood, FL (April 11, 2013) The Sumter County Sheriff's Office has arrested a Wildwood truck driver in connection with a series of burglaries that have been occurring in the area of the truck stop on S.R. 44 and Interstate 75. The series of burglaries began on or around January 24, 2013, where the suspect entered parked tractor-trailers targeting a variety of goods and food products.

Eric C. Wilkins, 43, of Wildwood was arrested at his residence in the 4900 block of CR 141 on April 10, 2013 at approximately 4 p.m. Wilkins became the focus of the investigation as detectives investigated another burglary to a parked tractor-trailer at the Pilot Travel Center located in the 400 block of E. S.R. 44 in Wildwood where several cases of steaks were stolen. Sheriff's Detectives were able to identify Wilkins as a suspect from surveillance video of Wilkins truck, a 1994 Kenworth and 53 foot trailer, leaving the parking lot.

After Wilkins arrest, detectives executed a search warrant at the property. The search revealed evidence linking Wilkins to the burglaries as well as burglaries in Marion County, Fl. Sheriff's Detectives also recovered a stolen 53 foot refrigerated trailer that was reported stolen in 2011 in Hernando County, Fl. and a second refrigerated trailer that had the VIN plates removed. In all, approximately \$80,000 dollars worth of stolen food and other goods have been recovered. That figure is expected to increase as detectives work with manufacturers in identifying the products origin and destination.

Wilkins is being held in the Sumter County Detention Center without bail. He is charged with 13 counts of Burglary, 10 counts of Grand Theft, 13 counts of Possession of Burglary Tools, 1 count of Unlawful Use of a Two-Way Communication Device, 1 count of Dealing in Stolen Property, 2 counts of Possession of Property with Altered or Defaced VIN, and Resisting an Officer Without Violence.

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