



# Division of Capitol Police

## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## 2 detained after Capitol Square vandalism

**RICHMOND** – Two people were detained Monday after police witnessed one act of vandalism in Capitol Square and discovered evidence that numerous others may have been planned.

Patrick E. Talamantes, 23, of Sacramento, Calif., was charged with one count each of misdemeanor vandalism on Capitol Square property and one of misdemeanor littering after being observed pulling a container of red dye from a lime green shopping bag he was carrying and tossing it into the fountain at the southeast corner of Capitol Square.

A short time later, officers saw a woman sitting on a bench alongside the other Capitol Square fountain, near the park's southwest corner, while also holding a lime green shopping bag. A search of that bag turned up the same contents as Talamantes' bag: one red dye pack and several balloons filled with red dye.

That woman was issued a written notice barring her from Capitol Square property for six months. Capitol Police are continuing their investigation, and additional charges are possible.

“I cannot condemn strongly enough these criminal actions,” said Col. Anthony S. Pike, the Capitol Police chief. “We work diligently to protect the rights of people to come to Capitol Square and freely speak and to have a forum for being heard. What we saw happen here today goes way beyond that. No one has any right to damage property, public or private, in the name of free speech. It is inexcusable and criminal, and it will not be tolerated.”

Talamantes and the woman were among a small group of people who arrived at the west side of Capitol Square on Monday morning carrying signs and chanting about various topics.

Capitol Police took Talamantes into custody within seconds of the incident, which occurred about 12:20 p.m.

Officers at the southwest end of Capitol Square then approached and detained the woman, who was sitting on a bench alongside that fountain with a lime green bag with a red dye pack and balloons.

“These buildings and these grounds at Capitol Square are public property and belong to the people – all the people,” Pike said. “They are not anyone’s private playground to damage and destroy at their whims. We will work with our law-enforcement partners to see that those who engage in this type of criminal activity are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

In an unrelated incident several hours later, Capitol Police arrested a woman who was approaching people directly in front of the Capitol’s Bank Street entrance while partially clothed. Michelle Renay Sutherland, 45, of Florida, was charged with a single count of indecent exposure.

Note: Capitol Police do not have booking photos, which must be obtained from the Richmond City Justice Center.



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