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Prolific Tagger of Metro Property Sentenced to One Year

(April 23, 2008) After two years of investigation for $108,000 worth of property damage to Metro equipment, Gustavo "Guser" Romero pleaded guilty to vandalism and was sentenced to one year in prison.

Transit Services Bureau Deputy Albert Zambrano, who worked the case with his partner Deputy Devin Vanderlaan, was none too pleased by the ruling from Judge Melissa Widderfield.

"It hurts us to see that we do so much work and then this guy only gets a year," Zambrano said. "It's discouraging to us. It's like a slap in our faces."

In addition to a year in prison – likely to be reduced to a few months due to the overcrowding of facilities – "Guser" will be on probation for five years, will be required to earn his high school equivalency, find a job and participate in an anti-graffiti program.

Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey Greenberg had asked for a 35-year sentence but "Guser" will probably serve six months or less. His sentence represents less than 2 percent of what prosecutors wanted.

"This is and was a prison-type case, in my opinion, with the substantial losses and damage," Greenberg said.

Because of his short sentence, "Guser" will be housed in a Los Angeles County jail instead of state prison.

- See metro.net report Feb. 13: TSB Deputies Rise Early to Bring Down a Tagger

-- Based in part on a report in the Daily News