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St. Thomas Woman Faces Felony Charges After Pellet Gun Incident Injures Children

Accidental discharge during a neighborhood blackout leads to multiple child injuries and serious legal repercussions

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Mugshot of Tichelle Turnbull. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A woman who injured several children after a pellet gun fell from her hands and discharged is now facing several felony charges before the V.I. Superior Court.

According to court documents, police were dispatched to the Bovoni Project Apartments on the night of Tuesday June 11, following reports that a boy had been shot with a pellet gun. Responding officers spoke to the minor's mother, who said that he had been playing with friends in the archway of the neighboring building following a power outage. The woman had been

standing on her porch when she heard what sounded to her like a gunshot, and then saw the crowd of children rushing out of the archway.

?Her son rushed into the apartment, the woman told police, and tried to make a beeline for the bathroom, blood running down his leg. His older sister made him tell their mother what happened, she said, which is when the boy told her that he had been shot by Tichelle Turnbull, who had then left the area. According to the boy, Turnbull was upset that her children had left the area with another adult. The mother of the injured boy said that two more children had been wounded by the pellet gun.?

Officers then spoke to the mother of a second wounded child, who said that she resides in the same building where the children were playing on Tuesday night. Her minor daughter was among the group. The woman also recounted hearing what sounded to her like a gunshot, upon which she rushed outside and pulled her daughter away from the crowd of panicked children and into their apartment. While doing so, she noted that another girl seemed to have been struck in her forehead, and was being helped away from the area. The woman also told police that she saw Turnbull leaving the building, black pellet gun in hand. Although the concerned parent said that she confronted the departing woman, Turnbull reportedly ignored her. When the child was examined, her mother said she discovered bruising on her legs.?

When police spoke to Turnbull, she said that the pellet gun belonged to a friend and she was on her way to return it, when it fell to the floor and discharged. She told police that she did not know that any of the children nearby had been injured as she was leaving the area. Police investigations supported her retelling of the events, concluding that the pellet from the gun's discharge ricocheted and struck the three children among the group playing in the archway.

Nevertheless, she was arrested and charged with third-degree assault, child abuse, reckless endangerment, and carrying or using dangerous weapons. Unable to post the \$25,000 bail as initially set, Turnbull was remanded into custody.

In court on Wednesday, Magistrate Simone VanHoltén-Turnbull ordered that Turnbull be released from custody ahead of trial, on conditions that were not publicly available as of press time. Court records do indicate, however, that Turnbull was referred to the Behavioral Health Unit of the Department of Health for an assessment. Her next court appearance is scheduled for June 28.