

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Man Charged After Climbing Neighbor's Roof and Stealing Starlink Device, Police Say

Police said Claudio Ponce Jr. entered a neighbor's yard, climbed onto the roof with a ladder, damaged surveillance cameras, and left with a Starlink device and one camera before officers later found the items hidden in his apartment.

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VIPD has not yet released a mugshot of the suspect. This story will be updated if one is provided.

ST. CROIX — A St. Croix man is facing theft, trespassing, and destruction of property charges after police say he entered a neighbor's yard in Estate Whim, climbed onto the

roof of the home, and removed a Starlink satellite internet device and a surveillance camera.

The incident, reported Saturday evening, ended with Claudio Ponce Jr. in custody and before the court on Monday, where a magistrate found probable cause to uphold the charges and set bail conditions ahead of trial.

According to police, officers responded to an Estate Whim residence after the homeowner reported that someone from the neighboring property had entered his yard earlier that day.

The resident told officers that when he returned home, his sister informed him that the intruder had come from the neighboring property, jumped the fence, and entered the yard.

According to the sister, she ordered the man to leave, but he cursed at her and remained on the property.

Police said the man then took a ladder and climbed onto the roof of the house, where he began damaging the homeowner's surveillance cameras. He then disconnected the resident's Starlink device and left with it, along with one of the cameras.

The homeowner identified the man as his neighbor's nephew, Claudio Ponce Jr.

Police later located Ponce near the Campo Rico apartments and detained him.

According to police, Ponce told officers that he had gone to the property at his aunt's request to address an ongoing issue with the neighbors. He said he had been instructed by an officer to "retrieve evidence" from the man's surveillance cameras.

Police said Ponce then showed officers the items he had taken, which had been hidden inside his apartment.

He was arrested and charged with grand larceny, trespassing, and destruction of property.

Ponce was remanded into custody and appeared before Magistrate Yolan Brow Ross on Monday.

In court, probable cause was found to uphold the charges against him.

Bail was set at \$20,000, with 20 percent required in cash to secure his release ahead of trial. However, because of what the court described as his extensive criminal history, Ponce cannot be released unless a third-party custodian is identified and approved by the court.