

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Driver Arrested for DUI After Collision Near Cost U Less

Crime / **Published On May 08, 2023 06:51 AM /**

Janeke Simon **May 08, 2023**



Mugshot of Shawn Maesel. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — An auto collision near the Cost U Less parking lot has led to DUI charges for one man.

Last Wednesday evening just after 7:30 p.m., a police officer was dispatched to investigate reports of an auto collision and found the vehicles – a silver Toyota Yaris and a blue Ford Explorer – and their drivers in the Home Depot parking lot nearby.

The driver of the Explorer, Shawn Maesel, was standing to the rear of his SUV. When he was summoned to the police vehicle to give his statement, the officer said he noted Maesel's unsteady, stumbling gait. As he recounted his version of events, the officer also said he could smell alcohol on Maesel's breath. Maesel admitted having a "couple drinks" from a pub about an hour earlier.

The three standardized field sobriety tests were administered, and Maesel reportedly abandoned the exercise in the midst of failing the second. "Just take me, I had drinks," he is reported to have said to the officer, who then brought him to the Traffic Investigation Bureau for a chemical analysis of his blood alcohol content, which resulted in a reading of .203, over twice the legal limit.

Maesel was then arrested and charged with driving under the influence, negligent driving, and illegal blood alcohol content.

After his arrest, subsequent investigations revealed that the Yaris was exiting the parking lot of Cost U Less and turned right onto Market Square East access road, going down hill. Maesel's Explorer is said to have strayed from its lane while traveling uphill in the opposite direction and collided with the Yaris, damaging it.

Following his advice of rights hearing last Friday, Shawn Maesel was released on \$1,000 bail to await his arraignment scheduled for May 19. The Office of the Territorial Public Defender was appointed to represent him in court.