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Robbery Suspect Dies After Painting His Face

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Richland County (WLTX) -- Deputies in Richland County say they've arrested the final suspect who they say robbed a cell phone store on Sparkleberry Lane.

One of the suspects, however, died shortly after the crime took place.

Investigators with the Richland County Sheriff's Department say 24-year-old Thomas James spray-painted his face to conceal his identity during the crime.

Deputies say the man began having trouble breathing shortly after the crime, then died. The exact cause of his death has not been released.

Deputies say James, with the help of 23-year-old Michael Gregory Thomas, robbed the Spring PCS store at 1131-B Sparkleberry Lane.

According to authorities, the suspects stole wallets, purses and credit cards from five employees of the store, after demanding money from them at gunpoint.

Investigators say James and Thomas ordered that the employees stay inside a bathroom while the suspects left the store.

Employees were able to identify Thomas as a suspect in the incident.

Reggie Anderson ■ 8/22/2009 4:33:24 PM



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