



COPS: DRUNKEN DRIVER HIT WORKER, FLED SCENE, WAS FOUND SLEEPING AT RELATIVE'S HOME

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BURNS HARBOR | Porter County prosecutors on Friday filed five felony charges against the East Chicago man arrested in connection with a hit-and-run accident that badly injured a construction worker on Interstate 94.

Ricardo Bustos, 21, of East Chicago, faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted of the most serious of the charges, which is leaving the scene of a serious injury or fatal accident while committing the offense of drunken driving.

He also was charged with two counts that involve drunken driving causing serious bodily injury while having a prior conviction within five years and two counts of drunken driving causing serious bodily injury. Indiana State Police said Bustos and the vehicle involved in the crash were found in East Chicago.

According to Indiana State Police Cpl. Dwayne Dillahunty, construction worker Roger Sadler, 49, of Michigan City, was struck at 3:03 a.m. Friday by a red 1998 Chevrolet Cavalier, which fled the scene with extensive damage dragging a construction barrel underneath it.

Police said Sadler was working in a temporary construction zone at the 23.1 mile marker one mile east of the Porter/Burns Harbor exit when he was hit by the Cavalier. The left and middle lanes were closed at 10 p.m. Thursday and were to remain closed until 6 a.m. Friday to fill cracks on the interstate.

The area leading up to the construction zone was well posted, police said, with message boards, arrow boards, construction barrels and road signs warning traffic of the temporary construction zone and closure. Sadler was standing outside filling cracks facing westbound in the construction zone when the driver of the eastbound Cavalier went into a crossover marked with no U-turn sign, police said. The driver made a U-turn going westbound inside the construction lanes and hit Sadler, police said.

Sadler was carried 35 feet when he was thrown from the car. Sadler was initially taken to Porter Valparaiso Hospital Campus in serious condition with head injuries and was later

flown to Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood. Loyola was not releasing any information on his condition Friday.

Police said Bustos' mother called police after Bustos' badly damaged car was located outside his grandmother's home in East Chicago. Bustos was found sleeping on a couch at the home. Police arrived to find another man -- who police say was not the driver -- sleeping in the passenger's seat of the damaged car. Police said they talked to Bustos and he stated he hit a road sign while driving and drove home by looking out the side window (since the windshield was damaged).

Police said Bustos and his passenger were kicked out of Club 390 after drinking a lot of alcohol, then went to other bars before trying to drive home.

Police said Bustos was taken to a hospital for a blood test and was found to have a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.124, higher than the .08 standard of intoxication in Indiana. Court documents state Bustos' prior drunken driving conviction dates back to April 13, 2009, in Lake County. His criminal record also includes a Porter County arrest on battery and invasion of privacy charges in 2008.

Bustos is expected to make his initial court appearance and have bond set on the newest charges next week before Porter Superior Court Judge William Alexa.

Sadler is employed by Moonrock Inc. of Rome City, Ind., but company officials offered no comment on the accident.