

# ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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**Theodore F. L. Housel**  
Prosecutor

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## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release  
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2 Page(s)

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MAYS LANDING – Superior Court Judge Michael Connor advised an Atlantic City man of his rights during his first court hearing Friday in connection with the stabbing death of a Ventnor man, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced.

Juan Carlos Lenis Montoya, 29, of Atlantic City, is charged Thursday night with aggravated manslaughter and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose for allegedly killing Steven Wingard, 47, at the victim's 15 South Hillside Avenue residence Monday.

During the brief hearing the Judge asked Lenis Montoya if he could afford an attorney. Through a Spanish-speaking court-appointed interpreter, he said, "Well, I don't know right now if I could hire an attorney."

Judge Connor told him he would receive forms he could fill out should he need a Public Defender.

First Assistant Prosecutor Murray Talasnik informed the court that Lenis Montoya is an illegal immigrant from Columbia and that the country gives the option to people charged in other countries to fill out a form specifying that they wish for an Embassy to be notified.

Lenis Montoya said he needs a lawyer first before he will decide if he wants his country to be notified. He remains in the Atlantic County Justice Facility on \$250,000 full cash bail.

It is alleged that Lenis Montoya stabbed to death Steven Wingard, 47, at the victim's 15 South Hillside Avenue residence during an argument. The men knew each other. Wingard frequented a restaurant Lenis Montoya worked at in Ventnor.

Ventnor police received a call Monday night for a well-being check at 5:33 p.m. at Wingard's residence. When authorities arrived they found Wingard dead on the living room floor of his apartment. The Prosecutor's Office Major Crimes Unit were notified

and responded. Atlantic County Medical Examiner Dr. Hydow Park pronounced Wingard dead at 9:45 p.m. Monday night at the residence.

Dr. Park performed an autopsy Tuesday afternoon and found multiple stab wounds to the victim's neck, which injured both the right and left carotid artery, the right jugular vein, the trachea and esophagus. The cause of death was aspiration of blood in both lungs along with major blood loss. Major Crimes Unit Investigator James Kirschner and Investigator William Anton along with Ventnor Detective Jason Rzemyk conducted the investigation.

**\*\*\*These charges are merely an accusation and not proof of guilt. In all criminal cases, a charged defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.**

**Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS). Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.**