



**ERIK NASARENKO**  
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
**NEWS RELEASE**



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## Santa Paula Man Charged in DUI Crash That Injured Sheriff's Deputy and K9

VENTURA, Calif. - District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Gerardo Israel Escalante (DOB 05/25/89), of Santa Paula, has been charged with felony driving under the influence (DUI) causing injury, felony driving with a .08 percent blood alcohol causing injury, and one misdemeanor count for unlawful vehicle operation. Escalante has also been charged with several special allegations, including causing great bodily injury in the commission of a felony and for having prior DUI convictions.

On December 16, 2023, at approximately 8:36 p.m. the California Highway Patrol received a 911 call of a white Mercedes swerving into oncoming traffic at high speeds. It was then reported that the Mercedes crashed head-on with a Ventura County Sheriff's Office patrol vehicle on Pacific Coast Highway, north of Deer Creek Road. The patrol vehicle traveled off the roadway and down the embankment onto the rocks near the ocean's edge, with the deputy and his K9 inside.

The deputy was transported to Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) to be treated for his injuries. His K9 partner sustained a cut to his face.

Escalante, who is currently on probation for DUI, was also transported to VCMC and later arrested.

Deputy District Attorney Kelsey Einhorn, a member of the Ventura County District Attorney's Office DUI Unit, is the prosecutor assigned to the case.

Escalante's arraignment was continued this morning to December 27, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 11 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He's currently in custody with bail set at \$500,000.

**Case: 2023033275**

**Defendant Information:**

Gerardo Israel Escalante (DOB 05/25/98)

Santa Paula

**Charges:**

- VC 23153(a) – DUI of alcoholic beverage causing injury
- VC 23153(b) – Driving with a .08% blood alcohol causing injury
- VC 23247(e) – Unlawful vehicle operation

**Special Allegations**

- VC 23566 – Prior DUI convictions
- PC 12022.7(a) – Great bodily injury in commission of felony
- CRC 4.421(a)(1) – Crime involved great violence
- CRC 4.421(b)(2) – Defendant's prior convictions are numerous or of increasing seriousness
- CRC 4.421(b)(4) – Defendant was on probation, mandatory supervision, post release community supervision, or parole when the crime was committed