



April 30, 2020

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Arrest warrant issued for Brighton man suspected of firing at oil & gas site

The Weld County Sheriff's Office has identified and obtained an arrest warrant for a Brighton man suspected of randomly firing at oil field workers at a site on the south side of the county.

Tyler James Van Auken, 31, of Brighton, is wanted on suspicion of menacing and possession of a weapon by a previous offender, both felonies, as well as misdemeanor charges of driving after revocation, prohibited use of weapons and reckless endangerment.

The charges stem from about 2:15 p.m. Monday when deputies responded to a report of shots fired at an oil and gas site located near the intersection of Weld County roads 6 and 29 north of Brighton. Witnesses later told law enforcement they were working at the well pad when a white SUV drove past and fired four or five shots.

The crew foreman chased the SUV and caught up with it when Van Auken pulled over to urinate. The foreman was able to take two pictures with his cellphone of Van Auken and the vehicle before the suspect sped away.

The Weld County Sheriff's Office *DOES NOT ADVISE* members of the public to chase down armed suspects on their own. *Always dial 911.*

Deputies were later able to identify the vehicle as a white Chevy Trailblazer featuring a Denver Broncos sticker on the left side of the tailgate. Investigators identified the registered owner and later interviewed her.

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The registered owner is not being identified due to her cooperation in the investigation. She told detectives Van Auken was driving her Trailblazer while intoxicated and decided it would be fun to fire randomly out the window. The owner also consented to a search of her vehicle, but investigators were unable to find the suspected firearm.

Investigators have spoken to Van Auken by phone, but he is not cooperating with the sheriff's office. He refuses to give deputies his location and has said he is not yet ready to turn himself in to law enforcement.

The Investigations Unit is actively searching for Van Auken, who is believed to be hiding out somewhere in the Denver metro area.

Anyone with additional information about Van Auken or Monday's shooting is asked to call Det. Anthony Simmons at (970) 400-5376 or Investigations Sgt. Aaron Walker at (970) 400-2856. Reference case number 20W014722.

Anyone with information regarding this or any other crime is asked to call the Weld County Sheriff's Office at (970) 356-4015 or Northern Colorado Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**. **Tips can also be submitted through the Crime Stoppers website at www.crimeshurt.com. Those submitting tips through Crime Stoppers that lead to the arrest and filing of charges on a suspect(s) may be eligible for a cash reward.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Reams'.

Steve Reams – Sheriff