

## **W . Bloomfield police seize 11 pounds of cocaine sent by commercial courier**

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**WEST BLOOMFIELD** -- Two people are in custody after **police** say they seized five kilograms --about **11 pounds** -- **of cocaine** that had been shipped to a fitness club via commercial courier.

A 36-year-old Southfield woman and a 36-year-old Detroit man were taken into custody and expected to face conspiracy to distribute drug charges which can carry up to life in prison. Another related search turned up more than \$80,000 in cash at West **Bloomfield** address.

The seized **cocaine** is estimated to have a street value **of** more than \$120,000.

**Police** said the **cocaine** was in a package addressed to Get A Grip Pilates, and detected by a U.S. Customs drug dog at a DHL shipping hub in Ohio.

A search warrant was obtained to open the package, which instead **of** gym equipment contained a small appliance that had been gutted **of** its internal workings and stuffed with five uncut bricks or kilograms **of cocaine** . Ohio **police** contacted West **Bloomfield police** who advised them to send it along to them for delivery.

A township officer dressed up in a DHL uniform and made the delivery to Powerhouse Gym on Orchard Lake Road early this afternoon. Another township officer, a 21-year-old female cadet, was inside the gym posing as a customer working out on a machine.

The delivery man was instructed to leave the package at a desk where a woman contacted another woman who came and took it into a back room. Officers observed her as she went outside and put it in the trunk **of** a small sedan.

The Detroit man drove off in the sedan and she followed in her SUV, **police** said.

The pair was stopped near 12 Mile and Northwestern Highway in Southfield, West **Bloomfield Police** Chief Ronald Cronin said. The woman was found to have a purse containing more than \$12,000 in cash. The man, who was driving the car with the drugs, had a handgun in his waistband.

Powerhouse Gym owner Ron Azzo said one **of** his employees signed for the package and gave it to a woman, but emphasized that the pilates company only rents space from his gym and is otherwise unaffiliated.

The pilates group could not be reached for comment.

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