

DETROIT: MAN IS UP TO 6 MURDER CHARGES - HE TOLD OF HITS ON COP'S WIFE, OTHERS

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Self-professed hit man **Vincent Smothers** is charged with three additional homicides in Detroit, including one that had not surfaced in a previous confession.

Smothers, 27, was recently arraigned on three more counts of first-degree murder in connection with killings from July 2006 through January 2007. He faces a total of six charges of first-degree murder.

A preliminary hearing on the most recent charges is scheduled for Wednesday in 36th District Court.

When **Smothers** was arrested in April, he confessed to killing seven people from August 2006 to December 2007. He told police he was paid between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for the jobs, and began to feel remorse for his actions only after he killed a Detroit police sergeant's wife.

Smothers said he walked up to Rose Cobb, 47, as she sat in a vehicle in a CVS parking lot in Detroit on the day after Christmas and fatally shot her in the face and head as her husband, Sgt. David Cobb, shopped inside.

Rose Cobb's slaying went unsolved for months, until **Smothers** was arrested and confessed to being hired by David Cobb to kill his wife. David Cobb was arrested a day after **Smothers** was, but Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy said there was not enough evidence to charge him. Cobb remains free but suspended. He has said through his attorney that he never met **Smothers**.

Smothers is being held without bond in the county jail.

He admitted to two of the three newest murder charges when he was originally arrested. He told police his first kill occurred Aug. 16, 2006, in front of a reputed drug house on Strasburg near Gratiot. He was hired to kill two brothers, he said, but only one was there at the time. Adrian Thornton, 27, was killed; a 28-year-old man was shot but survived.

On Jan. 17, 2007, **Smothers** said he returned to the Strasburg neighborhood to kill Carl Thornton, 29. Neighbors said **Smothers** waited in an abandoned house and ambushed Thornton and a 22-year-old woman. She survived the attack.

The newest case is the July 1, 2006, shooting death of Willie Watson, 33, on the 19000 block of Omira.

Watson was found shot dead outside of the home in what is believed to be a contract killing.

Maria Miller, spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office, declined to comment on the case.

Smothers ' lawyer, Gabi Silver, could not be reached for comment.

Smothers ' name also surfaced last month in a civil lawsuit. Detroit police investigator Ira Todd asserted that he was transferred from a high-profile task force after he turned up an allegation linking Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick to a reputed upper-level drug dealer.

Todd said in the lawsuit that he established a link between **Smothers** and a reputed drug dealer in Lexington, Ky., who claimed to have personal and professional connections to Kilpatrick.

After telling his superiors about the drug dealer's claims, Todd said he was told to take a vacation. He said he then was transferred out of the violent crimes task force, where he had worked since 1994, to a precinct. He said his bosses told him to turn over all the reports that referred to a link between Kilpatrick and the drug dealer.

"He was told not to do anything further on it at all. Period," Todd's lawyer Mike Stefani said.

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo

CAPTION: **Vincent Smothers** was arrested in April. He said a Detroit cop hired him to kill his wife.

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