

Serial Sonic burglar found guilty in case involving stolen bank bags from a Tonganoxie Sonic

OFFICE OF LEAVENWORTH COUNTY ATTORNEY
TODD THOMPSON, COUNTY ATTORNEY

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 21, 2023

countyattorney@leavenworthcounty.gov

<https://www.facebook.com/LeavenworthProsecutor>

CASE NUMBER: 2023-CR-000182

LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- A man responsible for stealing bank bags filled with cash from a Tonganoxie Sonic Drive-In and for the burglaries of multiple other Sonic Drive-in restaurants has been found guilty.

Patrick L. Best, 30, pled no contest to a count of **theft of property** during a hearing inside a Leavenworth County courtroom on Wednesday. The judge accepted the plea and found Best guilty.

According to online court records, Best has pled in multiple criminal cases that identify Sonic Drive-In as the victim:

- In January 2023, in Wyandotte County, Kansas, Best pled guilty to **burglary**
- In May 2023, in Johnson County, Kansas, Best pled guilty to individual counts of **burglary** and **theft**
- In August 2023, in Douglas County, Best pled no contest to **burglary**

Documents filed in the District Court of Leavenworth County, Kansas, detail how Best was identified as a suspect.

On April 17, 2022, Gardner Police stopped Best. Best was driving a blue van at the time. During a search of Best's van, officers located Sonic bank bags, a DVR, a Sonic cash register drawer, keys belonging to a Lawrence, Kansas, Sonic, and tools that could be used during a burglary. Following the search of Best's vehicle, investigators expanded their investigation.

On April 16, a day before Best was stopped, an employee of the Tonganoxie Sonic Drive-In reported that someone broke into the restaurant through the front door. Once inside, the suspect took two money bags collectively containing \$6,300. A review of surveillance video indicated the vehicle. Officers were able to locate Best in that vehicle. The DVR and bank bags were identified as belonging to the Sonic Drive-In in Tonganoxie. When inquiring about ownership of the keys inside Best's van, investigators learned at least one Lawrence, Kansas, Sonic location was burglarized.

Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson said, "No one should expect to be able to drive in and steal without consequences. We appreciate all the agencies that worked together and Sonic Drive-In for assuring this conviction."

Best is scheduled for sentencing on November 8.