


## NEWS

# Faribault officer charged with assault, DUI

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## Associated Press

FARIBAULT, Minn. -- A Faribault police officer was charged Tuesday with drunken driving and assault, accused of aggressively following another car, ramming into it and then chasing the driver into a restaurant with a knife.

Officer Harold Nielsen, 26, was charged with second-degree assault, terroristic threats, criminal damage to property -- all felonies -- and drunken driving.

According to the criminal complaint prepared by the Dakota County Attorney's Office, a 22-year-old college student was driving along Highway 60 on Sept. 2 when he saw a car rapidly approaching behind him, repeatedly flashing its headlights.

The light flashing continued for several miles until the student's car was hit from behind.

The student then slowed down to turn in to a restaurant parking lot, hoping to find help there, when his car was rammed and spun around. The student was able to pull into the parking lot and ran into the restaurant.

Nielsen followed him inside, demanding to know who had damaged his truck, the complaint said.

"Nielsen produced a knife and began chasing the victim around the restaurant, threatening to stab the victim," the complaint said. "At one point, several other people entered the restaurant and Nielsen confronted them with the knife, ordering them to leave the restaurant, which they did."

Fellow officers from the Faribault Police Department and the Minnesota State Patrol responded and arrested Nielsen, whose blood-alcohol content tested at 0.17 percent. He was off-duty at the time.

Investigators said the student's car was damaged beyond repair.