

*Jackie Lacey*  
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NEWS RELEASE

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**Duarte Man Charged with Murder,  
Attempted Murder, Assault After Backyard Incident**

A 40-year-old man pleaded not guilty today to killing his neighbor, shooting a second man and pointing a gun at a crowd in August, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Luis Santillan Valdes (dob 12/13/75) of Duarte has been charged with eight felony counts in case GA099511: one count each of murder, attempted murder, and fleeing a pursuing peace officer's motor vehicle while driving and five counts of assault with a deadly weapon.

Deputy District Attorney Vanessa Alfaro is assigned to the case.

Prosecutors said on the evening of Aug. 19 victim Gabriel De La Torre invited his neighbor, Luis Santillan Valdes, and several others to drink alcohol in his backyard.

While drinking, De La Torre and Valdes allegedly got into a fight. The defendant then reportedly left, but returned with a gun and fatally shot De La Torre, 32, prosecutors said. The defendant then allegedly shot one other man and pointed a gun at several others, according to prosecutors.

Following the incident, Valdes reportedly fled the scene and De La Torre's family called 911 for help. When authorities arrived, they were briefed about the alleged attack and given a description of the defendant's car, prosecutors added.

Law enforcement located Valdes as he was driving, but he reportedly refused to pull over his car, prosecutors said. The defendant eventually stopped his vehicle in Azusa and was taken into custody.

Valdes is scheduled to return to court on Nov. 28 for a preliminary hearing setting in Department 5 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Alhambra Branch.

If convicted as charged, the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of life in state prison.

The case is being investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

**[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.