

Feds seize van eyed in shootout

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About 10 hours after Tuesday's shootout over two luxury cars the FBI contracted to be towed, federal agents seized the green minivan used earlier in the midday ambush and two other luxury cars.

About 12:30 a.m. yesterday an FBI official said federal agents hit a garage on Randolph Street near Norris in North Philadelphia, where they seized the green Pontiac minivan, with its windows and windshield shattered and its side pocked with bullet holes.

Parked in front of the garage was a Mercedes Benz and a BMW, both with New York license plates, the official said. Both were also seized as part of the ongoing drug investigation.

The early morning raid stemmed from a 2:30 p.m. shootout Tuesday in which a green minivan blocked the first of two tow trucks turning from 8th Street onto Spring Garden.

Two gunmen jumped out of the van, driven by a third man, and ordered the operators of both trucks to release the cars outside the city Fire Administration building. One tow-truck operator drew a gun, for which he had a permit.

Today, an official said the FBI would obtain search warrants so an evidence team could analyze the seven vehicles for evidence during the next two days.

The vehicles include three Mercedes Benzes and one BMW used by the drug organization, the green minivan used in the ambush and two tow trucks, possibly struck by bullets while towing two of the cars.

The seized vehicles were not stolen, but agents would investigate the legitimacy of the registered owners, the official said.

Investigators believe the two holdup men and getaway driver are members of a larger drug organization. They are seeking their identities. ▼

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