

Woman charged in stabbing and robbery at Niagara Falls convenience store

By [Nancy Fischer](#) | News Niagara Reporter on April 22, 2014 - 2:25 PM

NIAGARA FALLS – The owner of the Merry Mart convenience store survived a butcher-knife attack in which the assailant left blood-smeared cash as she fled the shop, and police arrested a suspect a short time later.

Police caught the suspect in the attack, Jolene A. Hill, 27, of Buffalo Avenue, at Portage Road and Niagara Street.

Authorities said Hill walked into the store on 19th Street at 8:40 p.m. Monday armed with a butcher knife.

Hill allegedly ordered the store owner, Wael Rizek, 42, of Grand Island and a female clerk into a back storage area and threatened them with the butcher knife.

Police said Hill stabbed Rizek in the stomach while demanding money. Hill walked the clerk back out into the store and to the cash register. In the meantime, Rizek escaped from the storage room.

During the robbery, a witness was in the store with her 4-year-old son. She later told police she saw two women – including, authorities said, Hill – emptying the cash register. She yelled for them to stop. The customer was unaware of the knife, which Hill had hidden behind her back.

The customer tried to stop Hill from fleeing the store, but Hill instead ran into the child as she fled, dropping most, if not all, of the cash she had taken.

Rizek told police he saw Hill flee, heading west on Welch Avenue.

Officers James Woomer and Richard Fleck caught Hill and took her into custody.

Police found blood on the door handle as well as blood-covered money in the doorway, police said.

Rizek was taken by ambulance to the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center emergency room. There was no report on his condition.

Hill was arraigned Tuesday morning in Niagara Falls City Court on charges of first- and second-degree robbery, second-degree assault with a weapon, second-degree menacing, fourth-degree possession of a weapon and petit larceny. She was remanded without bail to Niagara County Jail. A return court date was set for Friday.