

**NEW YORK POST**

# Sandy looters skate as DA's drop cases

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Despite taking a hard line on looting arrests made in Sandy-ravaged areas, district attorneys in the city have had to toss out many of the cases, according to court records and defense attorneys.

"A vast majority of the looting cases were dismissed," said defense attorney Howard Tanner, who represented four accused Brooklyn looters. "Out of those four, one guy was indicted, two were dismissed, and one was reduced to a violation. Obviously the grand jury did not believe police accounts of what they saw."

A total of 16 people were arrested for allegedly looting a Key Foods in Coney Island late Halloween night – but a grand jury only voted to indict two of those cases, while six were dismissed and eight were charged with minor trespassing violations, according to the Brooklyn District Attorney press office.

Defense attorney Robert Marinelli represented three men accused of looting the Key Foods. Each had their case dismissed.

"My clients had no power, heat or water and were going outside to seek life's essentials. It's sad that they could not do so without being wrongly arrested and jailed," said Marinelli, who added that because the Brooklyn DA asked for huge bails that topped \$100,000 in some cases, his clients were locked up for up to ten days before their cases were dismissed.

Still, some of the looting cases held up. Errol Hunt was indicted after he was arrested for stealing four flashlights and \$427 from a shuttered 99-cent store on October 30. Two other men, Leonardo Swinton and Jamel Watkins, were indicted for burglary after they allegedly stole cigars, energy drinks, and lottery tickets from a Coney Island bodega.

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