

# Man charged 15 years after burning body found

By [Mike Petchenik, WSB-TV](#)

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SANDY SPRINGS, Ga. — Nearly 15 years after the burning body of a man was found in Sandy Springs, a North Carolina man is facing charges in his death.

In November 2001, a Dunwoody father and his son stumbled upon the still-smoldering body of a man in some woods off Morgan Falls Road. At the time, police said they had no identification on the man, nor did they have a suspect in the case.

An arrest warrant affidavit obtained by Channel 2's Mike Petchenik said in December 2013 police identified the man as 35-year-old **Jose Almeida**, a Brazilian who had come to the United States about a year before his death.

The warrant says in December 2015, Almeida's estranged wife, Angela McCord, went to police with an account of what she said she witnessed happen to him, and claiming her brother, Cristiano Laureano, was the killer.

"McCord stated she left the apartment to go to the store and when she returned to the apartment Cristiano and Jose were involved in a heated argument," the warrant states. "She saw her brother Cristiano Laureano stab Jose in the chest area two or three times."

The warrant stated that McCord told police Laureano told her to get her van so that he could load the body into it and remove it from the apartment.

"When Cristiano returned to the van, he said something about setting a fire so Jose would be found," the warrant states.

Police arrested Laureano at his North Carolina home in mid-December and he's now in the Fulton County jail without bond.

Thursday, a judge rescheduled a preliminary hearing for Laureano.

"He absolutely did not do this," defense attorney Jack Spence told Petchenik. "I would not be surprised if they don't indict this case. If they do indict it, I expect Mr. Laureano to be acquitted."

Petchenik showed the arrest warrant affidavit to veteran criminal defense attorney Lawrence Zimmerman, who isn't associated with the case.

"It's highly unusual," he said of the case. "I've never really seen anything like this in my career."

Zimmerman said prosecutors will have a tough time proving their case based on the word of an estranged spouse, 14 years after the fact.

"Where's she been all these years? Why didn't she call police?" he asked. "Why's she been in hiding for 14 years?"

Zimmerman believes McCord could find herself in trouble for admitting she aided in the disposal of Almeida's body and waited so long to tell police what happened.

"It is absolutely concealing the death of another," he said.

McCord is not facing charges and Fulton County Police told Petchenik the investigation is on-going, and they will not comment on whether more charges are coming.