

Mokone waives trial; admits attack with lye

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Stephen Mokone surprised the prosecution this morning by waiving trial and admitting an attack with a lye solution on his ex-wife, Joyce, last year.

The 45-year-old psychiatric social worker pleaded guilty to atrocious assault and battery while armed before Superior Court Judge Charles M. Morris Jr.

Under terms of a plea bargain between Assistant Middlesex County Prosecutor Joyce Munkacsi and defense attorney Ronald W. Reba of South River, Mokone is facing a maximum prison term of 12 years.

Mokone, 45, confined at the Middlesex County Jail in lieu of \$150,000 bail, is accused of throwing a lye solution at his former wife, Joyce, last Nov. 20 outside the Piscataway home of friends where she was staying temporarily.

The attack, which left the registered nurse with burns of the left eye, face and neck, occurred shortly after she sued Mokone for divorce. The Mokones have since been divorced.

Until his arrest, Mokone worked at the Rutgers Community Mental Health Center in Piscataway. His wife was a supervising nurse at a large New York City hospital.