

Grocer's shooting held 'justifiable'

Merchant fires five fatal shots in self-defense, say police

By **Richard Reyes Fruto**
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A south Los Angeles liquor store owner in self-defense fatally shot a man who broke three of the merchant's ribs and held up the store by saying he had a gun in his jacket, police reported.

Lee Arthur Mitchell, 42, died from five gunshot wounds in the late afternoon shooting on June 4 at Chung's Liquor Store at 7919 S. Western Ave.

The district attorney's office has determined that Tae Sam Park, 46, shot in self-defense, spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons said.

Mitchell was shot when he tried to wrest the gun away from Park, said Deputy Chief Matthew Hunt, commander of the South Bureau.

According to police, Mitchell entered the store and was turned away when he tried to make a purchase without enough money to pay for the item.

An argument ensued between Mitchell and two store employees, and Mitchell then said he had a gun and told them to put their hands up, Hunt said.

Park entered from the back of the store as Mitchell started to take money out of the cash register. Mitchell grabbed and hit Park, then shoved him violently behind the counter, cracking



Tae Sam Park broke three ribs in the attempted robbery at his south Los Angeles store. His wife tends to him.

three of the grocer's ribs, Hunt said.

Park then grabbed a .38-caliber revolver hidden near the cash register and ordered Mitchell to put his hands up. But Mitchell advanced even as Park waved the gun at him, Hunt said.

Park fired once, hitting Mitchell. But Mitchell continued to advance, and Park fired four more rounds during the scuffle, Hunt said.

According to Hunt, Mitchell had one hand in his jacket and continued to pretend he had a gun during the entire incident.