



SAN DIEGO SEXUAL ASSAULT FELONY ENFORCEMENT (SAFE) TASK FORCE

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“Operation Watchdog” Targets 300 Registered Sex Offenders Countywide

SAFE Team Checks Known Offenders in Unprecedented Sweep

The San Diego [SAFE \(Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement\) Task Force](#) conducted “Operation Watchdog,” on Wednesday, July 14, a first-of-a-kind sweep to locate targeted registered sex offenders in San Diego County and investigate their status. Twenty-six teams comprised of more than 110 local, state and federal law enforcement officers fanned out across the county in the early morning hours. Authorities contacted 300 known sex offenders, most of whom are not on parole or probation. Five of the teams were assisted by drug and firearm-sniffing dogs.

“Our goal was to determine if these registrants are complying with the law and to identify any illegal activity they might be engaged in,” said David Collazo, Commander of the SAFE Task Force. “This sweep was different from on-going audits conducted by SAFE in its focus and geographic breadth.”

Twenty registered sex offenders were found to be out of compliance and investigations have been opened on them. There were 9 arrests for various violations of parole or probation conditions, one arrest on a felony sex crimes warrant out of Salinas County and one arrest for drugs. The remaining individuals contacted were found to be in compliance with the law and living at their registered address.

During the countywide sweep, there were also 24 searches done resulting in the seizure of one handgun, a laptop, and other items suspected to contain child pornography.

“This kind of unprecedented cooperation between law enforcement agencies is what makes San Diego unique in its approach to sex offender management,” said Collazo. “We know all too well that monitoring known offenders closely is critical to public safety. SAFE and its partner agencies are committed to aggressively meeting that challenge.”

Members of almost every local, state and federal law enforcement agency in San Diego participated in the operation by providing names of identified targets and by joining the audit and search teams. Canines were recruited for the first time to help determine the presence of illegal drugs or firearms for those offenders on probation or parole. In total, 26 local, state and national law enforcement agencies participated in Operation Watchdog.

The SAFE Task Force was established in San Diego County almost a decade ago. Its mission is to diminish sex crimes and sexually-motivated crimes and apprehend the responsible offenders, thereby increasing public safety. There are about 4,000 registered sex offenders living in San Diego County. Already this year, the SAFE team conducted 1,036 regional audits and conducted more than 45 criminal investigations.

Participating agencies in Operation Watchdog included:

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation/Adult Parole
California Department of Justice/Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement Task Force
California Highway Patrol
Carlsbad Police Department
Chula Vista Police Department
Coronado Police Department
El Cajon Police Department
Escondido Police Department
Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives
FBI/Department of Justice
Immigration and Customs Enforcement /Department of Homeland Security
Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force
La Mesa Police Department
Law Enforcement Coordination Center
Naval Criminal Investigative Service/Department of the Navy
National City Police Department
Oceanside Police Department
San Diego County District Attorney/Bureau of Investigation
San Diego Harbor Police
San Diego Community College Police Department
San Diego Police Department
San Diego County Probation Department
San Diego County Sheriff Department
U.S. Border Patrol
U.S. Marshal
U.S. Probation Office

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