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Authorities check up on sex offenders on Halloween

By Kristina Davis

STAFF WRITER

Probation officers made one arrest yesterday in surprise home visits to sex offenders over the past two days, authorities said.

The sweeps were made to make sure the registered sex offenders avoid contact with children during Halloween.

Officers also searched for prohibited items such as pornographic magazines.

They staked out four houses yesterday to see if offenders living there answered the door to trick-or-treaters on Halloween, and none did. They also screened two Halloween carnivals and no saw no offenders there, said Daren Clark, a supervising probation officer.

Offenders are not allowed to put out Halloween decorations or answer the door to children. Those who live with roommates are told to go to the back of the house, shut the door and not participate.

On Friday night, probation officers contacted 12 sex offenders and found no problems, Clark said.

Yesterday, officers arrested one offender and found another who was in the wrong location and returned him to his correct jurisdiction, probation director Lisa Southwell said.

Officers searched 18 homes and made 15 personal searches early yesterday and seized several items, including one Halloween costume, illegally obtained prescription medication, including Viagra, passes to nude entertainment clubs, a machete, an ax and a knife.

Staff writer Michael Burge contributed to this story.

Home / News / Local News / San Diego County

REGION: Police hope random searches will deter molesters on probation

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By LUCIA WALINCHUS - lwalinchus@nctimes.com | Posted: Friday, October 30, 2009 11:00 pm | No Comments Posted

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The North County Probation Department wants to make this Halloween a lot less scary.

On Friday night, a team of 10 armed probation officers canvassed the area to check on 20 registered sex offenders before the holiday.

The sweep was part of a targeted effort to make sure that convicted molesters did not display decorations or music that would entice children into their homes.

The team searched 11 convicted offenders, who agreed to the random searches as a condition of probation. The officers didn't find any parole violations. The rest of the offenders were not home or their addresses were not correct.

While there is no law prohibiting sex offenders from displaying Halloween decorations, probation officers often discourage it as a way to prevent children from coming in contact with offenders who have orders not to be near juveniles.

Officer Randall Ream said he was happy with the result because it showed that probationers had gotten the message that further bad behavior would not be tolerated.

Call staff writer Lucia Walinchus at 760-739-6675.

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Probation officers sweep up child sex offenders before Halloween

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(CBS 8) - Keeping sex offenders away from children on Halloween is a big concern for police as kids set out to trick-or-treat. But crimefighters are working to stay one step ahead to make sure children stay safe.

There are over 2600 sex offenders in San Diego County, a portion of which are considered to be the most dangerous of child predators. Friday night probation officers paid a visit to some in an effort to protect kids this Halloween.

San Diego County probation officers spent Friday night visiting known Level 1 and mid-range child sex offenders in the North County who may have inviting decorations up for Halloween.

"They're very high risk. Yes it's just entices kids and it's a vicious circle, and they're more likely to re-offend," said Terry Fink the Senior Probation Officer with the San Diego County Probation Department.

Fink and his partners knocked on about 20 so-called targets for a third reminder to them to not put up decorations or hand out candy.

"They've all been warned. We've sent letters to them we've followed up with phone calls saying get rid of it we don't want to see it," noted Fink.

In fact, one pumpkin outside an offender's residence is a violation under the terms of probation.

"We don't want anything that will draw kids even close to the house," Fink explained.

After a quick search of the home, everything else appears within the set guidelines.

"He's going to post a sign that there's going to be no candy, no nothing out tomorrow night," Fink said.

At this home, a sign to Fink and his team that the proactive work they've done this year is working.

"He said his wife went out and bought a number of decorations and so forth, and they received our letter we sent out. He told wife here's our letter so she had to take it all back," continued Fink.

Fink admits he could be at home with his family instead of working late, but knows how important it is to try and protect San Diego Counties' little ghosts and goblins this Halloween.

"Absolutely it's a small price to pay to make sure we fell safe you feel safe," Fink added.

Parents can check to see where sex offenders are located, before heading out to trick-or-treat. [Click here](#) to see if there are any offenders in your neighborhood.

The sex offenders who are visited give up their fourth amendment right to search and seizure as part of their conviction.

Fink also says he and his team visit the higher risk offenders in Level 1 several times, both at home and work to make sure they're staying within the probation guidelines.



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