



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FEDERAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES TARGET VENICE-AREA GANGS

LOS ANGELES – Over the past six months, officers from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), agents from the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and prosecutors from the City Attorney's Office have investigated narcotics and gun trafficking by the Venice Shoreline Crips (VSLC) and V-13 gang members in the Oakwood neighborhood of Venice.

"This joint local-federal law enforcement effort once again puts gang members throughout the City on notice," said City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. "We will fight you with every tool at our disposal, at all levels of government. We will target you as individuals, and we will target your bases of operations."

This LAPD-lead investigation involved personnel from the Narcotics Abatement Unit (NAU) and Pacific Area Gang Enforcement Officers. It also involved the assistance of seven outside agencies. In all, there have been 19 arrests for sales of narcotics and/or firearms, with 33 suspects still outstanding. The suspects are members of VSLC or associates of the gang and have an age range of 18-30.

Over the course of the operation, undercover officers purchased several weapons from VSLC gang members and/or their associates. Recovered weapons include shotguns, machine pistols (Tech 9), an AR-15 rifle, semiautomatic pistols and a Derringer.

"Today's collaborative effort involving our partners with the ATF and the City Attorney's Office sends a clear message that law enforcement will not stand idly by while gang members terrorize our neighborhoods," said Deputy Chief Kenny Garner, LAPD West Bureau Commanding Officer. "These communities belong to the people who reside in them, not those whose only intent is to cause disruption."

Special Agent in Charge John A. Torres of the ATF is pleased with the enforcement operations occurring in the Oakwood area of Los Angeles. "Today's events reinforce that ATF will not put up with armed gang violence and the drug trade that fuels it," Torres said. "This is an outstanding example of the combined

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efforts of ATF, the Los Angeles Police Department, the United States Attorney's Office and the City Attorney's Office joining forces and bringing these gang members to justice."

City Attorney Delgadillo today filed a motion seeking closure of one of the narcotics locations (646 Broadway Ave.) which is the subject of an injunction signed in December 2005 prohibiting narcotics sales on the property.

Delgadillo also gave eviction notices to 13 individuals living in Oakwood pursuant to the Violent and Crime Activated Eviction Program (VACATE - Los Angeles Municipal Code section 47.50). Eleven of these tenants are members or associates of the VSLC gang and one is a member of the Bounty Hunters Bloods gang.

In addition, the City Attorney and LAPD will work closely with the City's Department of Recreation and Parks to address community concerns that the Oakwood Recreation Center is being used by gang members and associates as a base of operations for narcotics sales.

The City Attorney's efforts today are the latest in a series of legal actions taken against gang-controlled properties throughout the City. Through his innovative Project TOUGH (Taking Out Urban Gang Headquarters), the City Attorney targets the properties used by gang members to commit crime and terrorize communities.

TOUGH, a new section of the Citywide Nuisance Abatement Program (CNAP), addresses locations that typically have a wide range of criminal gang activity associated with the property, ranging from quality-of-life crimes like drinking in public, to violent crimes including shootings, assaults with deadly weapons, robberies, and murders.

The TOUGH program focuses on property abatements through lawsuits against property owners and gang members that seek aggressive and specifically-tailored injunctive relief. Since its inception, the TOUGH program has targeted several gang-controlled properties including those operated by the East Side Pain gang in the Harbor area, the Avenues gang in the Northeast area, the Black P-Stones gang in Baldwin Village, the Front Street Crips in Pacoima, the Venice Shoreline Crips in the Oakwood neighborhood of Venice, the Grape Street Gang in Watts, and the Rollin 30s Crips in South Los Angeles.

As part of City Attorney Delgadillo's anti-gang efforts, CNAP will continue to abate nuisance properties with special attention paid to locations with a gang connection. If gang activity is extensive at a nuisance property, the case will be transferred for special handling to the TOUGH program.