



NEWS RELEASE

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December 10, 2020

The Sheriff's Department has a comprehensive approach to keep illegal drugs from entering county jails. Our innovative strategy combines investments in equipment and technology, utilizing specialized resources and integrating investigative methods to provide a safe environment for those in our custody and staff.

70 to 80 percent of people in our custody are using drugs at the time of arrest or have committed a crime associated with their drug use (SANDAG 2019 Crime Justice Bulletin).

Drugs can pose the threat of harmful exposure and potential overdose. One example is fentanyl. A speck the size of a few grains of salt or just one touch of this drug can kill you. It can be absorbed through the skin or inhaled when it becomes airborne.

The misuse and abuse of opioids is widespread in the nation and our county. In its latest report card, the Prescription Drug Task Force recorded 275 overdose deaths in 2019. 151 of those deaths were because of fentanyl.

It should be noted the Sheriff's Department has always been at the forefront of the opioid crisis. In 2014, we helped pass a California law giving deputies and officers permission to administer a nasal spray that would counter the effects of an overdose. Our deputies were also the first in the Western United States to carry this nasal spray called Naloxone for overdose emergencies. So far this year, detention deputies and medical staff have saved 66 people from overdosing in our jails. Fentanyl is so potent deputies have at times administered up to seven sprays of Naloxone before a person regains consciousness. The dangers of fentanyl are real. Some deputies and medical staff have been rushed to the hospital after being exposed while administering the antidote.

Sheriff's Detectives follow all available leads to trace the drug from an overdose victim to his or her supplier. It's part of a protocol implemented in 2017 to hold those accountable for the manufacturing and supply of dangerous drugs.



KEEPING DRUGS OUT of JAILS



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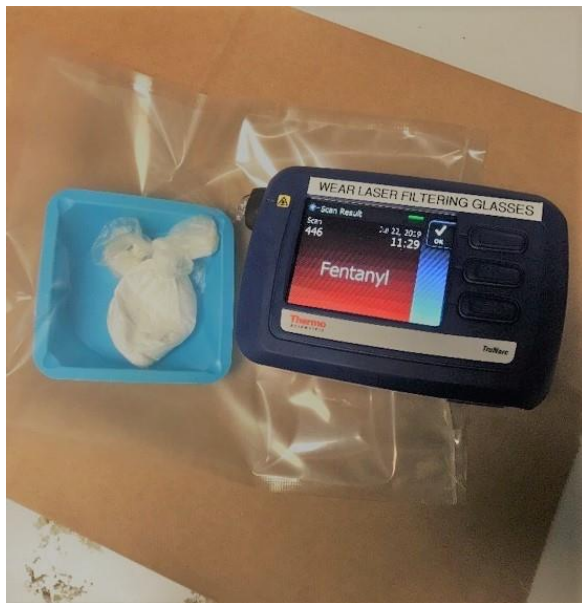


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These processes and systems were recognized by the American Jail Association (AJA) in April of this year with the national Innovation Award. Here's a snapshot of our multi-faceted approach that has resulted in a remarkable number of drug seizures.

Point of Entry	
Six high tech x-ray body scanners	"No Questions Asked" Drug drop boxes
Overdose awareness video at booking	Warnings on dangers of smuggling drugs in body at intake
Inmate screening and flagging of potential smugglers	Random searches of visitors who may be bringing in drugs
Interception	
Creation of Mail Processing Center with special equipment and deputies trained in detecting drug-soaked letters, cards, and other contraband.	
TruNarc – mobile testing device that identifies drug with the push of a button	Downdraft Tables – pulls dangerous fumes and particles from suspicious mail into a filter
Six drug sniffing K-9s	Anonymous Tip Line
Surprise searches of cells and housing modules	Drug awareness training for deputies and staff. Policy & Procedure updates
Using Intelligence Led-Policing (ILP) strategy to identify patterns, links and trends. Prosecution of smuggling cases	Substance abuse programs in jails in collaboration with community partners so person can stay sober upon release



This expansive approach resulted in a 45% drop in drugs being mailed into county jails.

So far this year (January to November 2020), the Sheriff's Detention and Investigations Unit (DIU) have seized more than 3,300 grams of heroin, meth, cocaine, fentanyl powder and pills being smuggled into the jails. That's a 34-percent increase in seizure compared to the same time period last year. Mail Processing Deputies also intercepted 228 drug-laced strips hidden in letters and cards. These seizures resulted in 88 people being arrested in the community and additional charges being filed for those already in custody.



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