



San Diego County SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE INFORMATION SHEET

Subject: Sheriff's Canine Stabbed in Jamul
Date of Release: 10-15-19
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Provider of Information (if different): S/A

The following information is fragmentary and has not been completely verified. It is based, in part, on hearsay and is intended for early information use rather than being a formal investigative report.

On October 15th, 2019, at about 10:10am, deputies from the Rancho San Diego Station received a radio call to check the welfare of a man seen walking around a vehicle and talking to himself in the 15000 block of Skyline Truck Trail in Jamul, unincorporated San Diego.

When deputies arrived, they contacted Richard Lechuga (a 29-year-old San Diego man) sitting in a vehicle. When deputies approached Lechuga to check his welfare, he sprayed three of them with "bear spray" through an open window. A Sheriff's canine was on scene and attempted to make contact with Lechuga after he assaulted deputies and brandished a knife and what appeared to be a handgun. During the incident Lechuga stabbed the canine in the head and face.

Deputies used a combination of less lethal munitions and devices including less lethal shotgun rounds, pepper balls, and a Taser conductive energy device to take Lechuga into custody.

Deputies were treated by the fire department on scene for their exposure to the bear spray. The canine was taken to a local vet for treatment of non-life threatening injuries. Lechuga was transported to the hospital for treatment of injuries sustained during his arrest.

Lechuga was arrested for charges including felony assault with a deadly weapon on a peace officer, assaulting a police animal, and resisting arrest. The handgun was later determined to be a pellet gun. The investigation of this incident is ongoing.

Please call Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477 with information and you will remain anonymous. You may be eligible for up to a \$1,000 reward for information leading to a felony arrest.