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CITY ATTORNEY ROCKY DELGADILLO FILES CIVIL SUIT SEEKING SHUT DOWN OF GRAPE STREET CRIPS PCP HOUSE

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, who's made the fight against criminal street gangs his top priority, today announced his office has filed a civil lawsuit to stop criminal narcotics activity at a Watts-area operational hub for the Grape Street Crips criminal street gang. The gang uses this property for sanctuary and the production of phencyclidine (PCP).

The property, located at 10330 Lou Dillon Avenue, is owned by Lillian Foster and is known by law enforcement as a narcotics hub and hideout for the Grape Street Crips, including Foster's son Alphonso Foster, a high ranking member of the gang with a long history of production and distribution of PCP and other narcotics including two Federal indictments for which he is currently incarcerated.

Since at least February 2005, Alphonso Foster and associates of the Grape Street gang have operated, occupied and used the property to manufacture PCP, store chemicals and narcotic precursors, traffic narcotics and perpetrate gang activity throughout the neighborhood. Over the past two years, LAPD officers have been called to the property several times for assaults, gunshots, and strong chemical smells, and have recovered several items used in the manufacture of PCP.

The lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, seeks the immediate closure of the property accompanied by testing for hazardous or toxic substances. Additionally, the requested injunction against the owner of the property would also require a thorough rehabilitation and decontamination of the property and implementation of a lawful occupancy plan. Demolition of the property could occur if all the necessary conditions are not met within a reasonable time period.

In August of 2007, LAPD officers received information that Alphonso Foster had supervised the manufacture of PCP in the rear yard of the property on Lou Dillon Avenue and had transported and dumped a highly toxic waste-by product at a second, nearby location. The LAPD Laboratory Squad was able to seize approximately 15 gallons of a substance containing sodium cyanide and other chemical byproducts known as "PCP sludge," the waste product produced from the manufacture of PCP.

In December 2007, a search warrant was executed on the property leading to the confiscation of white solids resembling rock cocaine, digital scales, cash in quantities and denominations consistent with narcotics sales, as well as the arrest of an active member of the Grape Street Crips.

The Grape Street Crips are a large, primarily African-American criminal street gang with more than 2,000 documented members concentrated in and around the Jordan Downs Housing Development in Watts with extending territory in the surrounding community. Grape Street Gang members are known to carry firearms and have a history of committing homicides, armed robbery, aggravated assaults, criminal threats, intimidation and vandalism.

Grape Street Crips gang members deal in the sale of narcotics including marijuana, rock cocaine and PCP and often move between properties owned by relatives or associates to prevent apprehension by law enforcement and hide out from rival gangs while conducting business. Procedures used in 'cooking' PCP at gang safe houses are known to result in the release of dangerous chemicals and/or explosions.

City Attorney Delgadillo secured a permanent injunction against Grape Street gang members in May 2005, restricting the gang's ability to associate or conduct illegal activity within the designated Safety Zone.

The litigation against the Grape Street Gang property is the latest in a series of legal actions taken against gang-controlled properties as part of City Attorney Delgadillo's ongoing effort to curb gang activity and crack down on criminal hangouts through T.O.U.G.H. (Taking Out Urban Gang Headquarters), a new section of the City Attorney's Citywide Nuisance Abatement Program (CNAP). T.O.U.G.H. locations will typically have a wide range of gang criminal 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 T.O.U.G.H. 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 T.O.U.G.H. 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, 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 T.O.U.G.H. program.

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