

# Armed Report

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## Anti-crime effort nets 141 arrests in Odenton, Severn

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A concerted anti-crime campaign by county police and sheriff's deputies targeting Odenton and Severn neighborhoods has netted 141 arrests, a cache of drugs, a few guns, cars and cash.

The roundup, which lasted several months, was a part of Operation ACTION, or Actively Combating Crime in Our Neighborhoods, and targeted the Pioneer City, Still Meadows and Meade Village neighborhoods in Severn and Seven Oaks in Odenton. Of the 141 arrested, 13, including

four minors, were charged with dealing drugs or substances that looked like drugs. Police also said they seized nearly a pound of marijuana, 26 ounces of crack cocaine and 37 prescription pills — a collection worth more than \$6,700 on the street. Additionally, police seized three handguns, a shotgun, three vehicles and \$8,400 in cash.

The county Sheriff's Department also served outstanding warrants, which led to some of the 141 arrests. Police said that the anti-crime operation will continue and more arrests likely will be made.

County police Western District commander Capt. Jerard Flemings could

not be reached for comment, but he has previously said he was taking a new approach to fighting crime in the area.

He implemented "special tactical patrols" and used marked, unmarked and covert police vehicles. Bike and foot patrols also were employed, he said.

The sheriff's department and the county's Special Enforcement Division, a group that includes county narcotics officers and vice units, also were involved, providing support and doing investigations.

"It was mainly just utilizing resources that were already in the department," said Sgt. John Gilmer, a

county police spokesman.

The effects of the campaign are noticeable, residents said.

Glenda Gathers, a Still Meadows resident and community activist, said the police patrols were obvious and had a calming effect on her neighborhood. People feel safe, she said.

"I believe everybody took notice," she said. "It was my court that had most of the problems. I went away for the holidays, so they had one big bust out here in my court. I got back and I was like, 'What's going on?' ... Whatever it is that they were doing they did it very good."

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# ARRESTS

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And police officers could be routinely seen, even in places where they weren't usually expected, said David Tibbetts, president of the Greater Odenton Improvement Association and a Seven Oaks resident.

"I've seen an increased presence in Seven Oaks," he said. "I've noticed more enforcement. I've seen them in places you don't usually see them, and at times, too, like Sunday mornings."

County Executive John R. Leopold said the effort was based on community concerns and crime statistics. He said the goal is to prevent more serious crimes by attacking the less serious ones.

"This is a full-court press to fighting crimes in the neighborhood," he said.

The 13 charged with dealing drugs, along with the four mi-

nors, included:

- Terrell Ellsworth Blake, 24, of Baltimore.
  - Curtis Leon Brown, 21, of Severn.
  - Robert Lee Galloway Jr., 24, of Severn.
  - Raleigh Jay Harold, 53, of Severn.
  - Nathaniel Christopher Harris, 30, of Severn.
  - Dontae Timothy Jones, 22, of Severn.
  - Kelon Darnont McKinney, 19, of Glen Burnie.
  - Arthur Antonio Noakes, 43, of Glen Burnie.
  - Timothy Savage, 39, of Severn.
- County Councilman Jamie Benoit, D-Crowsville, said he believes a part of the problem is a small handful of unscrupulous landlords who don't pay attention to their property or their tenants. Eventually, parts of some neighborhoods become attractive places for criminals.

"Once you create the climate where criminal enterprise is easy and accepted, it starts to

infect the rest of the neighborhood," he said.

County Councilman Daryl Jones, D-Severn, said the roundup shows how important it is to create long-term opportunities for the people who live in the four targeted neighborhoods.

"It certainly also underscores our call for the building of a community center in that area and the need for job training and education," he said.

Law enforcement is just one of the ways officials are trying to keep the Odenton and Severn areas safe. In December, county health and building inspectors toured Boomtown, a rundown stretch of Route 175 in Odenton, looking for violations of the county code.

Leopold, who was on the tour, said that it was a part of a "broken-window philosophy," a concept that minor problems, like trash on a yard, can lead to bigger ones, like dilapidated businesses.

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