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CAMDEN CITY POLICE “CRACK DOWN” ON DRUG BUYERS AND PROSTITUTION

CAMDEN – The Camden Police Department, in conjunction with its law enforcement partners, launched a series of directed operations resulting in a total of 110 arrests last week. Operation “Crack Down” is an array of operations which will continue to be a staple of the Department’s Summer Crime Plan.

“From barbecues to block parties to playing in the park or swimming pool, we want Camden residents to enjoy spending time outdoors with their family and friends during the summer months,” Mayor Dana L. Redd said. “Through strategic crime fighting methods like Operation Crack Down, or the utilization of technology like our Mobile Command Center, Shot Spotter Program, and Eye in the Sky cameras, our police department will continue to operate in a forward leaning position to ensure public safety in Camden remains a top priority.”

Operation Crack Down was designed to disrupt drug distribution and prostitution schemes. The city-wide operations included targeting illegal drug buyers who fuel Camden’s illegal drug trade resulting in 64 arrests, of which 50% of those arrested reside in the suburban communities.

“Our tactics and strategies will remain fluid and dynamic to keep criminals off-balance as we attack both the supply and demand side of the illegal trades,” said Camden City Police Chief J. Scott Thomson. “The Camden Police will continue to aggressively target the suburban patrons who continue to fuel and abet in criminal activities.”

The demand reduction operations, also known as “Reversals,” involve undercover officers that pose as dealers and distribute imitation drugs to requesting buyers who are then subsequently arrested. The areas targeted included 8th & Grant, 4th & Mt. Vernon, 100 block of Eutaw, Newport & Thurman, 2300 block of Howell, and 2300 block of Admiral Wilson Blvd.

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Participating in the operations were members the Camden Police Department Tactical Narcotics Team; New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice; New Jersey State Police; Camden County Prosecutors Office; and Camden County Sheriff's Department. Those arrested were charged with Loitering to Commit a Controlled Dangerous Substance Offense and released pending a court appearance. They potentially face up to a \$1,000 fine, six months in County Jail and six months loss of license.

A separate series of operations were conducted which targeted Prostitution and those that solicit prostitutes in the Broadway corridor of the city's Downtown and Waterfront South areas. The operations involved undercover detectives posing as "Johns" which resulted in the arrests of 37 women charged with Prostitution offenses. Undercover Detectives also posed as Prostitutes who were then solicited by "johns" resulting in nine arrests for Soliciting Prostitution. These operations were performed by the Camden Police Department Special Victims Unit and General Investigations Unit.

Those arrested were released pending a court appearance, while some of the women arrested were detained in the county jail for having active warrants. They face up to a \$1,000 fine, six months in County Jail and six months loss of license.

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