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D.E.A. Investigations Help Columbus Shut Down Franklinton ‘Drug Distribution Center’ and Hilltop Drug House

Properties were the scene of approximately 100 police runs for drug trafficking, overdoses, shots fired, robbery, sexual assault, stolen vehicles, murder investigations, wanted fugitives, dead bodies, crates of ammunition, and more

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that the City of Columbus continued an aggressive program that combines criminal investigations with civil litigation to shut down nuisance properties that plague neighborhoods with guns, drugs, and violence—and, in what appears to be a first for the city, the initiative received help from the U. S. Department of Justice’s Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The City Attorney’s office secured two emergency court orders earlier this morning to board up most of an apartment building that DEA special agents were told was used to distribute “kilo sized bricks of heroin and fentanyl” in Franklinton, and a Hilltop area drug house that was spinning out of control.

City attorneys filed dual motions for *ex parte* temporary restraining orders in the Franklin County Environmental Court against three of the four apartment units located at [269 South Davis Avenue](#), which is within walking distance of Dodge Park Community Center, and an owner-occupied house at [524 South Oakley Avenue](#). The Columbus Division of Police evacuated both properties in separate raids following the court proceedings around 12:00 p.m. today. Representatives from Safe Streets, Columbus Housing, Columbus Public Health, and Maryhaven were onsite in case any innocent residents needed assistance.

“Along with our collaboration with the U.S. Attorney’s office to target dangerous domestic abusers, this is another opportunity for our office to partner with federal law enforcement to help make our neighborhoods safer,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“In order to effectively address the root causes of the drug epidemic, we need all levels of government working together and taking a holistic approach. That’s why I’m also working with County Prosecutor Ron O’Brien and state leaders to reform Ohio’s drug sentencing laws to properly distinguish between the individuals suffering from addiction who need treatment and rehabilitation and the drug dealers and traffickers who prey upon them.”**

[269 South Davis Avenue](#)

According to court documents, Columbus Police responded to this apartment building more than 50 times in the last two years for narcotics complaints, gang activity, multiple drug overdoses, assaults, robberies, stolen vehicles, shots fired, murder investigations, and at least

two dead bodies.

On December 3, 2017, officers responded to a report of an overdose and found “several women lying on the floor.” The officers also found cocaine, syringes, a loaded revolver, and a crate of ammunition. The following day, police responded once again to a report of an overdose and encountered “several females lying on the floor with varying levels of responsiveness.” Six out of the seven individuals inside at the time had active warrants for their arrest.

On September 7, 2018, police and paramedics were dispatched to the premises and found a deceased individual. According to reports, officers “found no signs of foul play but did locate a small amount of chore boy [and other drug paraphernalia] in the victim’s room.”

Around this same time, DEA special agents were informed that at least two of the apartment units were being used as a “drug distribution center for the Franklinton neighborhood.” Executing a federal warrant, the agents—and task force officers assisting them—recovered suspected cocaine and fentanyl, along with other suspicious substances and a firearm.

On October 7, 2018, officers and medics responded to a report of an unresponsive individual at the premises and found a deceased male. Officers continued responding to the premises multiple times for narcotics and prostitution complaints, shots fired, a stolen vehicle, and more drug overdoses throughout this year. Columbus narcotics detectives also conducted several covert purchases of crack cocaine and heroin, culminating in a recent search warrant. Officers were notified of another possible homicide at the premises on May 22, 2019. The investigation is ongoing.

524 South Oakley Avenue

Columbus Police responded to this property at least 47 times in the last two years for narcotics trafficking, drug overdoses, sexual assault, stolen vehicles, domestic violence, and robbery. It is the third drug house the city has shut down on S. Oakley Ave. since last October.

The owner/occupants are a family of four with varying degrees of criminal conduct. Incidents deteriorated to the point that the owner and his son told officers that the drug users and drug dealers they catered to had “taken over” their house. Someone also tried to light the house on fire and a paramedic—who was responding to the property to help a victim—had his driver’s license, debit card, and cash stolen from his medic vehicle.

Narcotics detectives conducted several covert purchases of crack cocaine and heroin at the premises before executing a search warrant on May 1, 2018. Officers encountered the owner, Raymond Green, and 11 other individuals inside the 720 square-foot residence while seizing crack cocaine, black tar heroin, cash, ammunition, and several firearms. The owner’s son, James Green, was arrested on felony drug charges. About a month and a half later, police received complaints that narcotics sales had resumed at the property.

Officers and paramedics responded to several drug overdoses, including one on January 5, 2019 in which the victim was reported to have snorted fentanyl. Officers also responded to a report of a victim whose face was bleeding and swollen after being beaten because he was “a drug user who owed money to too many people.”

On May 3, 2019, police received a call that James Green had numerous firearms and was threatening to “shoot officers.” James Green then called 911 to state that his “sister was having a mental breakdown.” Upon arrival, officers observed that someone had poured a flammable

liquid on the floor of the house and tried to light it on fire. They also found a female who had “a severely infected wound that was not being care for.”

On June 9, 2019 officers encountered Raymond and James Green outside their house asking for help. Upon entering, officers observed “countless heroin needles, three digital scales with powder residue, large quantities of burnt aluminum foil with heroin residue, and numerous baggies and foil for packaging narcotics.” Up to seven people ran out the back door, leaving behind an unconscious female in the backyard. Other witnesses claimed that Raymond and James Green had “numerous handguns” and “a significant amount of fentanyl and heroin” hidden away in a safe inside one of the bedrooms.

“We greatly appreciate the court granting the emergency board-up orders and want to thank the Columbus Division of Police and the Drug Enforcement Administration for their diligent work on these cases,” said Assistant City Attorney Zach Gwin, who is assigned to Police Zone Three on the city’s west side. “We’ll continue to be aggressive in rooting out the drug activity that’s harming neighborhoods all across our city, particularly here on the west side.”

Hearings for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief against both properties are scheduled for June 28, 2019 at 9:30 p.m.

Copies of the court’s orders for [269 S. Davis Ave.](#) and [524 S. Oakley Ave.](#) are available online.

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