

COPS NAB FENTANYL SUSPECT - DETROIT RAID LEADS TO BREAK IN CASE

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Friday, June 23, 2006

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Wayne County sheriff's deputies and federal drug agents arrested a convicted drug dealer during a raid on his home in Midtown Detroit on Thursday. One official characterized it as a breakthrough in the investigation into sources of **fentanyl**-laced heroin blamed for killing scores of people.

A joint investigation by the Sheriff's Department and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration into the deaths of several heroin users who purchased drugs in the Jeffries public housing project led to the raid Thursday.

It is the second known raid in a week as law enforcement steps up its efforts to find the sources of drugs containing the painkiller, which is 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine.

Fentanyl, which is mixed with cocaine or heroin to create a more intense high, is suspected in at least 80 overdose deaths since September in Wayne County.

On Thursday, Deputy John Roach, a spokesman for Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans, called the arrest of a 45-year-old convicted drug dealer "a major breakthrough" in the search for the source of a heroin- **fentanyl** mix called "Magic." Roach said the raid identified "a major distribution point."

He said "several of the deaths have led us to drug purchases in the Jeffries."

Evans and Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano scheduled a news conference today to discuss details of the investigation.

The name of the man arrested was not released pending charges and analysis of suspected drugs found in his condominium near Wayne State University, which was not complete Thursday evening.

Another law enforcement official who spoke on condition of anonymity said the Jeffries housing complex, on the western side of the Lodge Freeway between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Canfield Avenue, is the site of many heroin sales to suburban drug addicts because of its convenient location.

"It's an easy-off and easy-on place," the official said. He added, however, that the site is probably one of many sources for illegal drugs in the city.

Authorities **suspect** one of those sources was a home on Keating near John R and 7 Mile in Detroit where Lauren Jolly, a 17-year-old Bloomfield Township high school student, is believed to have overdosed on May 24.

Donald Coleman, who police say is a drug dealer, is being held on a parole violation in Jolly's death. Coleman, 26, and his brother, James Edgar Coleman, 36, were arrested by officers from the Detroit police major crimes division and federal drug agents on Saturday after a raid on the house.

Jolly told police about the house after she was arrested for possession of heroin laced with **fentanyl** about six weeks before her death.

Thursday's arrest was the third made as part of the investigation into drug trafficking at the Jeffries projects in recent weeks, officials said. Authorities did not say precisely what led them to the Midtown condominium, however.

Fentanyl -laced drugs have been a growing concern in cities across the nation, with deaths reported in St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Chicago and elsewhere.

In Wayne County, an explosion of deaths in late May and early June, which were believed to be related to **fentanyl**, led state officials to ask investigators from the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to visit and prepare a report on the outbreak.

The report has not yet been released.

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MEMO: CORRECTION RAN JUNE 30, 2006

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Edition: METRO FINAL
Section: NWS; NEWS
Page: 1A

Correction: A front-page article Friday about the police investigation into drug dealers selling heroin laced with fentanyl incorrectly said the Jeffries housing project is on the west side of the Lodge Freeway between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Canfield Avenue in Detroit. That is where the old Jeffries apartment buildings were located. It is now the site of Woodbridge Estates, a new housing development that was not part of the drug investigation. The article should have said police were investigating drug trafficking at the Jeffries projects on the east side of the freeway.

Index Terms: arrest; suspect ; drug dealer;death; drug abuse; Lauren Jolly; juvenile;heroin; fentanyl

Record Number: dfp0000285546

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