

Fentanyl probe nets 3 suspects - Detroit men thought to be dealing heroin laced with powerful painkiller are arrested.

Detroit News, The (MI) - Friday, June 23, 2006

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DETROIT -- Wayne County Sheriff's investigators today will announce a major breakthrough in the investigation into the sale of **fentanyl**-laced heroin with the arrest of three Detroit men suspected of distributing the deadly combination of drugs.

One of the three **suspects** is described by investigators as a primary distributor of heroin laced with **fentanyl**, a powerful painkiller suspected in the deaths of at least 79 drug users in Metro Detroit.

Police sources said the deputies focused on drug dealers working out of a townhouse unit at the Jefferies public housing complex, where they made several undercover buys of the heroin-**fentanyl** mixture, referred to on the street as "magic."

Two **suspects** were arrested in connection with the sales at the Jefferies complex. The Michigan State Police crime lab confirmed the presence of **fentanyl** in the heroin sold to the undercover deputies.

On Thursday, deputies raided a condominium not far from the Jefferies complex with a search warrant; more suspected heroin mixed with **fentanyl** was seized, and a third **suspect** arrested.

The state police crime lab is expected to have the results of their analysis of drugs in that seizure today.

The investigation is being conducted with the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, the Wayne County Medical Examiner and prosecutor's offices. Sheriff Warren Evans and County Executive Robert Ficano are expected to announce details of the case at a press conference this morning.

On Thursday, the Michigan Department of Corrections moved to revoke the parole of Donald Edwin Cunningham, 26, the drug dealer who police **suspect** may have supplied Bloomfield Township teenager Lauren Jolly with the **fentanyl**-laced heroin that killed her on May 24.

Cunningham was taken into custody Monday in the investigation of Jolly's death. Police discovered he was a fugitive from parole since 2003. He was serving a 2001 sentence of 1 to 5 years after pleading guilty to delivery of less than 50 grams of cocaine and receiving and concealing stolen property worth more than \$1,000 and less than \$20,000.

He will be returned to the corrections department's reception center at Jackson for a hearing that will determine how much more time he will serve in prison.

Authorities across the nation have stepped up an investigation into the use of the illegal painkiller mixed with heroin or cocaine. The drug has been linked to 79 deaths in Wayne County in recent weeks and another 130 deaths since January 2005.

On Wednesday, DEA agents arrested 29 alleged members of gang suspected of trafficking **fentanyl** -laced heroin and seized more than 100 kilograms of the drug.

Section: Metro

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Company Name: #keywords2#

Index Terms: DETROIT ; DRUG TRAFFIC ; INVESTIGATION

Dateline: DETROIT

Record Number: det24279082

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