

## **Police arrest 31 men in alleged drug ring - Cocaine, heroin, guns seized from east-side dealers, DEA agents say**

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DETROIT -- **Police** and federal authorities said Wednesday they have arrested **31 men** who for years have pumped cocaine and heroin into the city's east side, **in** part through a network of **drug** dealers **in** Arizona.

Culminating a 10-month joint investigation, **police** said they seized 29 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated \$5.3 million. **In** addition, they confiscated a van, 25 guns, \$225,000 **in** cash and nearly a pound of heroin, which is worth an estimated \$169,000.

"These are street-level violators," said Jimmy Fox, an assistant special agent for the U.S. **Drug** Enforcement Administration **in** Detroit. "From the neighborhood's standpoint, they are just as big as the guys over **in** Bogota, (Colombia), because they create havoc **in** the neighborhood. They tend to incite additional violence."

The **men** -- most of whom have prior **drug** convictions -- primarily sold **drugs** on Detroit's east side **in** the 9th (Gratiot) and 11th (Davison) precincts, though there also were instances **in** Highland Park, **police** said. The **men** were not believed to be affiliated with a single gang or organization. Undercover agents repeatedly bought **drugs** from the **men** , **police** said.

So far, 21 of the **men** have been indicted on federal **drug** charges and 10 are facing state **drug** charges. Where possible, authorities steered the cases into federal court because sentences are often steeper and there is no parole **in** the federal system, Fox said.

Also, investigators are still reviewing whether to file other charges **in** the case. The guns, for example, are being traced to determine if they were used **in** other crimes, he said.

Two **men** already have been charged near Phoenix after authorities here were tipped off about the source of some of the Detroit **drug** supply, Fox said. Federal agents there found 22 pounds of cocaine and are continuing their investigation **in** Arizona, he said.

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