

PHARMACY ROBBERY INVESTIGATIONS

Deputy Nick Baldrige
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Background

- ▣ Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Santa Clara University
- ▣ Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from The University of Cincinnati
- ▣ Patrol Deputy for 8 Years with SCSO
- ▣ K-9 Handler for 6 of the years
- ▣ Court recognized expert in narcotic identification, possession for sales, influence of narcotics and narcotics trafficking.

Background (cont.)

- ▣ Court expert in prescription drug recognition, identification for sales of prescription medication and street level use regarding prescription medication.
- ▣ Key note speaker for numerous organizations regarding the use, identification of addiction and preventative measures related to prescription medication.
- ▣ ROP Criminal Justice teacher at Soquel High School

Commonly Abused Prescription Medications

- ▣ Norco, Vicodin, Tylox
- ▣ Oxycontin, Oxycodone
- ▣ Methadone
- ▣ Percocet
- ▣ Percodan
- ▣ Xanax
- ▣ Subutex, Suboxone
- ▣ Fentanyl

Extent of the Problem

- ▣ Prescription drug abuse is starting as early as 12 -13 years of age.
- ▣ 75% of high school juniors and seniors know how and where to obtain any opiate based prescription medication within an hour.
- ▣ Prescription drug use at the high school level is estimated at approximately 25%.
- ▣ Prescription medication is commonly used during high school aged parties.

Ways of Ingestion

- ▣ When used illicitly prescription medication is ingested by:
 - Smoking is the most common form of ingestion.
 - ▣ The pill is put on a piece of aluminum foil, a heat source is put under the pill and a straw or hollow pen is used to ingest the smoke.
 - Snorting is less common, but also used.
 - ▣ The pill is grated, typically using a hose clamp, to create a fine powder and then snorted.

Ways of Ingestion (cont.)

- ▣ Injection is less common, but has a higher likelihood of future heroin use.
 - The pill is grated and placed in water. The water is then heated to dissolve the pill completely and draw into a syringe.
 - Injection points are typically the arms, neck and legs (using a large gauge needle into the femoral artery).

Withdrawals

- ▣ Heavy users report withdrawal symptoms as soon as 6 to 12 hours after last use.

- ▣ Withdrawal Symptoms Include:
 - Perpetually Tired
 - Joints and Muscles in Constant Pain
 - Hot/Cold Sweats
 - Insomnia
 - Excessive Yawning
 - Watery Eyes
 - Depression
 - Heart Palpitations
 - Uncontrollable Coughing
 - Nausea
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
 - “I thought I was dying!”

Ramifications of Use

- ▣ Users indicate they will do ANYTHING to get more no matter the consequences.
 - Addicts are committing Residential Burglaries, Robberies, Car Jacking, Car Burglaries, Grand Thefts, Check Fraud, Prescription Fraud and Prostitution to get money for prescriptions.

Pharmacy Robberies

Preventative Measures

Lighting and Surveillance

- ▣ At night the lighting around the entire building should be on and illuminating any shadows or dark areas.
- ▣ A large number of surveillance cameras should be placed throughout the store and made visible.

Interior Deterrence

- ▣ Have a clear barrier at pharmacy counter.
- ▣ Have a single locked door as the only access point into the pharmacy area.
- ▣ Have a panic alarm button installed in 2 locations in the pill area.
 - One at the service counter and a second somewhere on the other side of the room.

What to Do if a Robbery Occurs.

Gun Challenge

- ▣ Can you identify the real firearm?
- ▣ Are you willing to bet your life on a fifty/fifty chance???????

Pros and Cons to Video

- ▣ Was there a deterrence in the pharmacy?
- ▣ Did the pharmacists act appropriately?
- ▣ Since there were more of them should they have fought back?
- ▣ Was the gun even real?
- ▣ What would YOU do in this situation?

- ▣ Would you chose to do this???????????

Is it Worth the Risk?

- ▣ Are the pills on the shelves worth the chance he may have a gun?

“4 Killed In Medford Pharmacy Shooting”

Published New York Times June 19, 2011

A gunman shot four people inside a New York suburb pharmacy, killing everyone inside the store, in what police say was a robbery gone bad.

After executing the 41year old Pharmacist, 17 year old assistant and two customers , the suspect filled his backpack with Hydrocodone and Vicodin then leaving the store.

Don't Let History Repeat Itself

- ▣ Were any target hardening measures taken to prevent this robbery just over a month later?

Steps To Take If a Robbery Occurs

Compliance Saves Lives

- ▣ There is no amount of money or pills worth a person's life.
- ▣ Try to stay calm. Keep breathing and focus on what the robber is asking for.
- ▣ Do not look directly at the robber, but try to pay attention to what they touch.
- ▣ If you have a panic button try to get it pushed prior to the robber getting to you, but only if you can do it without being seen.

What To Do After A Robbery Occurs

Preserve the Scene

- ▣ Provide the best description possible as fast as possible to law enforcement.
- ▣ Try to get video surveillance ready for responding law Enforcement.
- ▣ Do not touch any of the areas where the robber touched.

- ▣ What evidence was left by this suspect?

Santa Cruz Walgreens Robbery

May 22, 2013

The Robbery

- ▣ Stephen Hill, who is a 27 year old drug addict, enters the Walgreens wearing a canvas bag on his head with hole cut in it for his eyes.
- ▣ He approaches the pharmacy counter and demands Xanax. He then changed his mind and wanted Klonopin.
- ▣ When the employee could not find the Klonopin he then demanded methadone.

The Take

- ▣ Hill left the store having take:
 - 21 bottles of 10mg Methadone (100 count)
 - 6 bottles of 5mg Methadone (100 count)
 - 3 bottles of 2mg Alprazolam (100 count)
 - 1 bottle of 30mg Morphine (100 count)

The Getaway

- ▣ Hill fled from the store after getting the 3,000+ pills and was apprehended 0.2 miles away.
- ▣ Prior to committing the robbery he had walked up to the front door of the business wearing his mask and was called in by a Walgreens employee that was in the parking lot.

Conviction

- ▣ Hill was convicted of the robbery in Santa Cruz County.
- ▣ What could have been different to prevent the Hill Robbery?

Contact Information

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THANK YOU