



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



Incident

DATE/TIME: January 29, 2016

TOPIC: Massage Parlor Sting & Human Trafficking Investigation

CASE NUMBER: 16S-00836, 16S-00835, 16S-00841, 16S-00842

INFORMATION:

On January 29, 2016, the Santa Cruz Police Department Neighborhood Enforcement Team (NET) conducted an undercover human trafficking and prostitution sting focusing on illegal acts of prostitution in local massage businesses. The operation was borne out of community complaints and suspicions about the activity occurring in the businesses.

Four local businesses were visited by undercover officers during this operation. In all four locations, employees solicited the undercover officers by offering to perform sex acts in exchange for money during the course of the massage. The businesses are:

Lucky Valley Health Center
827 Water Street

Asian Massage
212 Fern Street

Health Care Massage
223 River Street

Golden Bay Spa
551 Frederick Street

In all, four women were cited for soliciting an act of prostitution. Their ages are 50, 44, 30 and 42 years old. Our investigation revealed that all four of the women are Chinese Nationals.

It is not uncommon to find that women working in such businesses, engaging in illegal acts of prostitution, are indeed victims of a larger human trafficking operation. The Police Department Victim Advocate and an advocate from Monarch Services accompanied the operation to offer services and assist in assessing the participants for possible human trafficking involvement. The team also included Mandarin and Cantonese translators.

In addition to the advocates, other agencies assisting in this operation include the Santa Cruz County Anti-Crime Team (SCCACT), the District Attorney's Office, and Federal and State law enforcement.

The Santa Cruz Police Department Neighborhood Enforcement Team plans to conduct similar operations in the near future. These operations are designed to address potential human trafficking operations and ensure these businesses are operating within the law.

The Santa Cruz Police Department is committed to improving the quality of life for our community and stopping those that seek to victimize and/or exploit others. Anyone who has information on illegal activity, such as this, in and around the City of Santa Cruz is encouraged to contact the Santa Cruz Police Department. Tipsters can also share this information via our anonymous tip line at (831) 420-5995. Additional services available for victims of human trafficking include:

National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7888

Monarch Services 1-888-900-4232

For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke

Phone: (831) 420-5844

Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; www.santacruzpolice.com. Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.