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## Deputies Conduct Probation Searches on 9 Convicted Taggers

- Damage to the Metro System exceeded \$10,000

By JIMMY STROUP

(Nov. 27, 2007) Transit Services Bureau (TSB) deputies served probation search warrants, Nov. 21, against nine offenders who were on probation for tagging Metro property.

Sheriff's Sgt. Augie Pando said the damage the nine offenders caused to the Metro System exceeded \$10,000. Pando and Sgt. Mike Estrada each led a team that included probation officers to homes throughout the San Fernando Valley to check for probation violations.



Graffiti paraphernalia such as spray paint cans, nozzles or drawings or graffiti-like images (such as the ones in the photo above) are usually forbidden by the judge when a convicted tagger is placed on probation. The homes of nine graffiti offenders on probation were searched, Nov. 21, to ensure that they were in compliance with their probation requirements.

"We went out to see if they're in compliance with what the judge told them they were supposed to be doing," Pando said. "At one house, this guy was told that he couldn't be in possession of any kind of paint, [yet] he had, maybe, 30 cans of spray paint."

Estrada's team visited four properties and found one offender in violation of his probation and two in full compliance.

Contraband graffiti equipment – identified by the offender's grandmother as his – was found in one house, but deputies were unable to locate the suspect. A violation warrant will be sworn out against him.

### Suspect in a closet

While at the home of one offender, Pando's team discovered a man hiding in a closet. He was taken into custody after deputies learned there was a Grand Theft warrant out for his arrest.

TSB deputies like to keep vandalism probationers on their toes, Pando said, but because of their regular duties are not often able to check on them.

He said offenders in violation of probation will face a judge; probation revocation or sentence enhancements are at the judge's discretion.



"It's up to the judge and up to what the probation officers recommend," Pando said. "We just go out to the houses and serve the searches."

TSB deputies are planning to check on probation violators again in December.

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