



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
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DA MIKE HESTRIN SEEKING CIVIL GANG INJUNCTION IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY

COACHELLA VALLEY – Today, February 25, 2016, Riverside County District Attorney Mike Hestrin announced that he is seeking a civil gang injunction against a criminal street gang based in the Coachella Valley.

Members of the Varrío Coachella Rifa criminal street gang were given notice of the DA's Office intent to seek the injunction today, Feb. 25, 2016, during a significant gang sweep operation in which more than 100 locations in eastern Coachella Valley were targeted by more than 500 law enforcement members. DA Hestrin announced the operation at a news conference held this afternoon at the Riverside County sheriff's Thermal station. Information about arrests and any drug and/or weapons seized during the gang sweep can be obtained through the Sheriff's Department.

"The best analogy to describe a gang injunction is that it is both a wedge and a broom," said DA Hestrin. "It serves as a wedge by breaking the gang's ability to run in a pack or congregate publically. An injunction bans gang members from associating publically with one another therefore striking at the heart of the gang by forcing them apart. An injunction is like a broom in that it sweeps gang members off of our streets, out of our parks, and away from our businesses, thereby confining their activities away from the public.

"I want to make this point very clear," Hestrin adds. "Any gang member who doesn't want to be subject to this civil injunction has two choices: they can leave the gang or they can leave the area. It's as simple as that."

A gang injunction, in essence, is a court-ordered restraining order against members of a specific criminal street gang. In the civil lawsuit, gang members are sued and notified that they can be arrested for violating the terms of the injunction. In the Varrío Coachella Rifa gang injunction the DA's Office seeks to prevent members of the criminal street gang from engaging in the following activities within a specific "safety zone" listed in the injunction: no association with any Varrío Coachella Rifa gang members; no illegal drugs; no alcohol in public; no firearms, imitation firearms or dangerous weapons; no trespassing; no reckless or unlawful driving; no false information; no intimidation; no gang tattoos or logos; no gang signs; no gang apparel; no graffiti or vandalism tools; no fighting; no curfew violation; and no violations of law.

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