

Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

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MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE December 17, 2007
TIME 8:30 PM

Drug Agents Find 18-Month-Old Child Inside Home with Drug Lab

Ceres, CA- Agents from the Stanislaus County Drug Enforcement Agency Taskforce discovered a drug lab in a home with an 18-month-old child living inside. Agents received a tip about the possible methamphetamine drug lab in the 2600 block of Kay Street in the City of Ceres late last week.

Today while conducting follow-up investigation on the tip, agents contacted the residents in the home on Kay Street. While talking to the residents, agents could smell the odor of chemicals similar to a methamphetamine drug lab. Agents also noticed a small child inside the home. The two occupants of the home were detained and a search warrant was obtained to search the home. Inside the home, agents found chemicals and appliances that are used in manufacturing methamphetamine. Agents said that this was a "box lab" meaning that chemicals and appliances were being stored. Agents also found evidence that subject had been previously manufacturing methamphetamine within the garage. The chemicals used in this process are highly volatile and this process was taking place next to the hot water heater and washer-drier unit. Agents have investigated drug lab fires where the cause of the explosion was the result of similar conditions.

Based on the amount of chemicals and the sizes of the appliances, drug agents called this a "super meth lab" able to produce up to 10-12 pounds of crystal methamphetamine valued over \$200,000.

Agents arrested SOTO-CUEVAS, Francisco Javier 12/03/1985 and FERNANDEZ, Alondra 09/24/1987. The 18-month-old child was the nephew of FERNANDEZ. The child was taken to a local hospital to be checked for exposure to chemicals and was medically cleared. He was later released into the custody of Child Protective Services. CPS was attempting to contact the child's mother who worked in the bay area.

Anyone with information about this case is encouraged to contact Agent Bruley at (209) 558-6300. Callers can also leave an anonymous tip by calling Crime Stoppers at (209) 521-4636 and be eligible for a cash reward.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Royjindar Singh (209) 652-6597.