



David P. Gonzales, United States Marshal

## News Release

For Immediate Release  
October 31, 2017

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## **OPERATION SAFE TREAT 2017 APPREHENDS WANTED SEX OFFENDERS IN STATE WIDE INITIATIVE**

Phoenix, Ariz- Throughout the month of October, Deputy U.S. Marshals, Task Force Officers, and numerous federal, state, and local law enforcement partners collaborated in "Operation Safe Treat 2017" across the state of Arizona. This operation is aimed at protecting our children by targeting fugitive sex offenders, child predators with outstanding arrest warrants and those wanted for crimes against children. 41 arrests were made and 45 warrants were cleared during this operation.

"The State of Arizona has approximately 15,000 registered sex offenders residing in our communities," said David Gonzales, U.S. Marshal for the District of Arizona. "The U.S. Marshals Service works every day in identifying and arresting those who violate sexual exploitation, notification, and reporting requirements. Our annual "Operation Safe Treat" program, coordinated with our local law enforcement partners, gives us another opportunity to focus on predators who pose a risk to public safety."

Of the 41 arrests made, they include 11 for Failure to Register as a Sex Offender, 8 for Sex Offenses/Sex Assaults, 13 for Child Molestation, 5 for Child Neglect/Abuse as well as 1 for a Weapons Offense and 3 for Robbery/Burglary. The following arrests are examples of the sex offenders targeted during this operation:

- On October 24<sup>th</sup>, Walter Rinkel, 61, was arrested in Ehrenberg on a felony warrant out of Florida for 12 Counts of Possession of Child Pornography and warrants for Failure to Register as a Sex Offender. Rinkel's original offense stems from a conviction for Child Molestation. Prior to the warrants being issued, information was received that Rinkel left the state of Florida by van and was seen at a local campsite in Mississippi where he was allegedly allowing young children to watch television in his van.
- On October 27<sup>th</sup>, Edward Doughty, 40, was arrested in El Mirage. Doughty has a lengthy criminal history to include charges of Assault, Drugs, Larceny and Aggravated Criminal Sexual Assault, requiring him to register as a Sex Offender. Doughty was currently wanted on a warrant for new charges of Kidnapping and Domestic Violence/Aggravated Assault stemming from an incident in which he allegedly brutally beat a female victim and then fled the scene.

The primary goal of Operation Safe Treat 2017 is to ensure that the seasons' celebrations remain a safe and enjoyable holiday for our children by apprehending fugitive sex offenders. A vital component to the success of this operation was the immense contribution made by state and local law enforcement counterparts throughout Arizona, whose cooperation was essential in coordinating and executing this effort.

Another critical aspect of this operation is to ensure convicted sex offenders are residing at their place of record. This important element continues tonight as law enforcement personnel team up with probation officers in Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma to conduct compliance checks intended to ensure that supervised sex offenders are complying with their terms of probation and are not participating in any Halloween activities.

The United States Marshals Service is the nation's oldest federal law enforcement agency. Annually, U.S. Marshals arrest more than 50 percent of all federal fugitives and serve more federal warrants than all other federal agencies combined. For more information on USMS Fifteen Most Wanted fugitives and USMS Major Cases, go to [www.usmarshals.gov](http://www.usmarshals.gov).

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