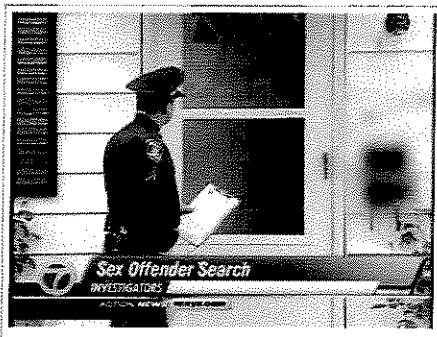


3 School Closings or Delays: Click Here



INVESTIGATION: Non-Compliant Sex Offenders

Last Update: 10/31 12:26 pm



(WXYZ) - The Action News Investigators discovered some disturbing information about the state's sex offender registry on the eve of Halloween.

IN THE VIDEO PLAYER ON THE RIGHT, HEATHER CATALLO LEARNED THAT IT MAY NOT BE AS EASY AS YOU THINK TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE A POTENTIAL PREDATOR IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

CLICK ON THE LINK AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE TO ENTER THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SEX

OFFENDER REGISTRY

[Heather]

I have learned that more than 11% of Michigan's sex offenders are considered non-compliant... which means they're breaking the rules in some way.

Often – sex offenders are not following the guidelines about their address – and that means even if you check the state registry often... the information about where a potential predator is living.. may not always be accurate.

Stephanie Bessert and her kids are excited for Halloween. The annual door-to-door candy extravaganza is all about the fun for children... but for moms like Stephanie, it's a reminder that you have to know if there are any sex offenders living nearby.

[Stephanie Bessert/Mother] "You just worry about the unknown. Who's living in the neighborhood, I'm not exactly sure who's there with all the turnover that's happening these days."

Stephanie tries to check Michigan's Public Sex Offender Registry website.. so she knows which potential predators are in her zip code. While the state police work hard to maintain an accurate list of Michigan's 43,510 registered sex offenders... the Action News Investigators have learned that 4,945 offenders are currently considered non-compliant.

So what does that mean?

It means the offender has failed to meet at least one requirement of being on the registry. Some of those requirements are administrative... such as paying a fee, or maintaining a valid ID. But 2 of the requirements deal with an offender's address – and that's where things get scary.

If sex offenders fail to verify where they live either yearly or quarterly.. or if they fail to report a change of address within 10 days... they become non-compliant.

[Stephanie Bessert/Mother] "That's terrifying, where are they? Why aren't they coming clean, is there something more to hide?"

And that's why the police come knocking.

Earlier this week, we asked to ride along with officers as they tried to track down the 120 non-compliant sex offenders who were last known to be living in Pontiac.

[Sgt. Brian Budde/Michigan State Police] "Hello, is Yolanda here?"

At this house, Sgt. Brian Budde was trying to find Yolanda Hobson.. who was convicted of 4th Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct. Sgt. Budde says he learned that she recently moved out... without telling the police.

[Sgt. Brian Budde/Michigan State Police] "This was her primary residence up till about two weeks ago."

Once Sgt. Budde tracks Yolanda down... she could be charged with a crime for failing to verify her address.

"Hello? State Police"

The addresses for 3 of the offenders on Sgt. Budde's list... led us to vacant or empty homes.

According to the registry, Rosalie Kurbitz once lived at this home – but she hasn't verified her address in 2 ½ years.

This was the last known address for Epifanio Perez... convicted of 2nd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct. But the family living there now doesn't know him.

[Sgt. Brian Budde/Michigan State Police] "He moved without notifying us that he moved, and basically we'll do an investigation now to determine where he's living, and he'll be charged with a felony."

When an offender becomes a felony violator that can't be found, police say he or she is an absconder. In all, Michigan has 1100 known absconders... 179 were last registered in Wayne County, 63 in Oakland County, and 23 in Macomb County.

Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard introduced the legislation that started the registry more than a decade ago. He says everyone can help to keep track of sex offenders by checking the list, and signing up for email alerts that notify you if someone is moving in to your neighborhood.

[Michael Bouchard/Oakland County Sheriff] "Public participation would be helpful to get the compliance rate up, and to get more accuracy into the list."

[Heather]

If you know that a sex offender is not using an accurate address – you can submit a tip to police right on the state website.

[We have link to that right here.](#) That way you can find out who is in your neighborhood, so your family can have a safe and happy Halloween.

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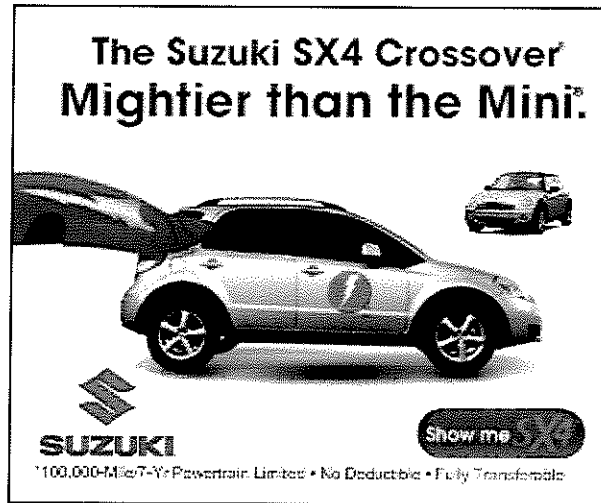
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