

Drugs found in search of Hickory Street home

A search warrant was executed Monday at a Mount Vernon residence on Hickory Street, following a months-long Mount Vernon Police department investigation into reported drug activities at the residence. Knox County Sheriff's Office assisted the execution of the search warrant.

One residence, 58 year-old Debra Huff, was arrested on an outstanding warrant for probation violation. There were other occupants reported at the residence but no charges have been filed against them at the moment.

MVPD Chief Robert Morgan said that police have gathered both citizen complaints and officer generated information on the residence. The information has been forwarded to the Knox County Prosecuting Attorney for review, according to Morgan.

Prosecuting Attorney Chip McConville said that the search warrant was issued based on the reported drug activities. The warrant is currently sealed due to confidential information it contains regarding the justification for the search warrant.

Law enforcement seized drugs, drug abuse and trafficking related items at the residence during the search, according to the press release issued by Morgan.

McConville said that Huff, who is currently held at the Knox County Jail, will also be charged with aggravated possession of drugs and permitting drug abuse. The permitting drug abuse charge could be brought forth when a person knowingly allows someone to use or sell drugs on a property that they own or occupy.

Because Huff is a renter of the property, the property owner has also been notified by the prosecutor's office. McConville said that he is in contact with the owner's legal representative and expects that the owner will file an eviction.

The prosecutor also has the option to file for a nuisance action which will lead to the property itself being boarded up. McConville said he has filed for a nuisance action before when the property involved in criminal activities was owner occupied.

In most cases when a tenant is charged with permitting drug abuse, the property owner will take initiative to evict when notified.

Morgan emphasized that the investigation into drug and nuisance activities on the property took time and partnership with multiple agencies and man hours.

"This type of investigation takes time," Morgan said, "It doesn't happen overnight."

The Mount Vernon Police Department is part of the METRICH Enforcement Unit.

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