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Citizens to get info on meth

By Jennifer Sullivan

Times Snohomish County bureau

A group of Snohomish County residents is creating a series of pamphlets to help police, businesses and parents learn more about methamphetamine.

Susan York, executive director of Lead On America, said that by the end of next week, nearly all law-enforcement officers in the county will have a stack of the pamphlets in their squad cars and offices. Officers are being asked to give them to people who want to report possible drug activity in their neighborhoods.

By the end of March, two other pamphlets — one directed toward parents and families and the other toward businesses and community groups — will be published by Lead On America, a citizens' group.

Snohomish County Sheriff Rick Bart said he asked the group to prepare the brochures after he attended a community meeting in Granite Falls last month. Bart said he isn't sure how much the pamphlets will cost or who will pay for them. He says he plans to request state funds and will also ask the Snohomish County Council next week for money.

York, a Mukilteo resident, and Travis Talbot, members of Lead On America, helped drive meth dealers out of their neighborhoods. They teach their tactics to other county residents interested in doing the same.

York said they advise people to watch suspected drug houses and to chart possible drug activity — including suspicious cars and people.

"Meth is the least expensive and more dangerous drug on the market today," said Talbot, a graphic designer who lives in Edmonds. "One of the big things the pamphlet does is it gives expectations."

Talbot said the brochures will encourage people to be patient with the legal system. Readers are told to expect several rounds of arrests and criminal trials before meth houses are emptied.

Talbot said it will cost about \$10,000 to publish all three pamphlets.

The first pamphlet will list signs that someone is selling or using meth in a community. Officers will be urged to hand out the pamphlets to residents who suspect meth has moved into their neighborhood. York said the group hopes the pamphlets will help officers reduce the amount of time they spend with

residents explaining a drug in detail and "empower" the people who called for help.

York said every law-enforcement agency in the county has requested the pamphlet, except for the Mukilteo Police Department.

Mukilteo Chief Mike Murphy said York's group has not approached him about the pamphlets. He said Mukilteo has never had a report of a meth-production facility and rarely receives reports of meth sales.

Talbot said a second brochure, which will help parents determine whether their child is using meth, will be released in early March.

The pamphlets will be available at local churches, schools, police departments and YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs and at online.

A third brochure will offer businesses and community groups approaches on how to combat possible meth dealers and houses where meth is being manufactured. It will be available at police departments and through the Lead On America Web site after March 15.

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