



COLUMBIA RIVER DRUG TASK FORCE

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For Immediate Release

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2023 Overview

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<http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/sheriff>

The Columbia River Drug Task Force (CRDTF) had a successful year in 2023. The mission of the CRDTF is to combat illegal drug activity, current law enforcement issues facing our community, and to help promote successful and thriving communities in both Chelan and Douglas County. The highly skilled and motivated members of the CRDTF take this mission very seriously, which is reflected by their accomplishments in 2023.

In 2023, the CRDTF opened 119 new cases. Out of those cases, they had 104 total arrests. They also seized over \$76,000 in cash and \$175,000 in bank accounts. The unit served 56 search warrants that resulted in the recovery of 21 firearms, many of which were stolen. That is 21 guns taken out of the hands of people who by law should not have had them. Additionally, the unit seized nearly 5,500 grams of methamphetamine, 750 grams of cocaine, 24,970 fentanyl pills, and 74.6 grams of pure fentanyl powder. Other drug seizures included heroin, marijuana, and a variety of different prescription-type drugs that were illicit. These stats not only reflect the hard work of the CRDTF, but they highlight the prevalence of drugs in our communities. While it's impossible to measure the number of lives that were saved by these drug seizures, when 2 milligrams of fentanyl powder can be lethal, it is safe to say lives were saved as a result of their seizure of the 74 grams of fentanyl powder and 24,970 fentanyl pills.

The CRDTF not only combats the drug epidemic, they also remain very flexible in the cases they work and how those cases relate to the needs of the community. As a result, they also work cases that relate to firearms, gangs, violent crimes, and serial offenders. This combined focus had a positive impact on juvenile gang violence, in addition to the increasing drug use and fentanyl overdoses. The CRDTF worked a case that led to the arrest of a resident of Safe Park 1 in the City of Wenatchee. That investigation led to two additional arrests of drug dealers who were supplying drugs to residents of the Safe Park locations. Additionally, the CRDTF met with all the principals from Eastmont School District to educate them on youth gang trends and fentanyl. CRDTF members also did presentations at two other local schools, and participated in the WPD Citizen's Academy.

Moving forward into 2024, the CRDTF aims to continue to reduce crime rates, have our community members feel safe each and every day as they go about their way of life, and continue to have a reputation where Wenatchee, East Wenatchee, Chelan, and Douglas County are great places to raise their families and live for generations to come.