

Graffiti Tagging Crew Arrested

February 2010

Months of diligent work by the Santee Public Services Division and the Santee Sheriff's Station has paid off.

In early February, 2010 the Sheriff's Community Policing Unit developed information on a prolific tagging crew operating in the City of Santee consisting of seven criminal graffiti "taggers". The City of Santee Public Services Division worked diligently over the past several months to document and clean up the damage caused by the taggers, while a state-of-the-art Graffiti Tracker investigation system was used to determine that the "tagging crew" had committed over 80 incidents since April 2009.

As a result of the information gathered from Graffiti Tracker, witnesses and other sources, Santee Deputies were able to obtain a search warrant, which was served at the Santee residence of two of the suspects. The overwhelming evidence resulted in the arrest of the two suspects and led to the identification and arrest of numerous other "taggers" as well. The investigation ultimately solved approximately 100 graffiti vandalism cases in Santee.

The estimated cost to repair the damage was in excess of \$24,000. By working with City crews on the graffiti abatement project, the arrest and prosecution of the vandals will lead to restitution and the City's ability to recover the cost of the repair and repainting of community property.