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Office

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**San José Police Puts High Risk
Sex Offender Information Online**

First California city to post detailed information under Megan's Law

San José ---- Detailed online information about 24 high risk sex offenders currently living in San Jose is now easily available to the public on the San José Police Department website, www.sjpd.org.

Mayor Ron Gonzales, Vice Mayor Pat Dando, and members of the San José City Council joined the San José Police Department today to unveil the new website that posts names, photographs, description of crimes, and the street and block number of high-risk sex offenders living in San José.

“Protecting our residents and families in our neighborhoods is our first priority,” said Gonzales. “Providing instant online access to the most current information available on sexual predators in our community helps us achieve this goal.”

In November the San Jose City Council approved a proposal sponsored by Gonzales and Dando that authorized the police department to post comprehensive sex offender information on the police web site. By logging on to the web site, residents can learn if any high-risk sex offenders live in their neighborhoods.

“Sex offenders are one of the most difficult criminal populations to rehabilitate. That’s why it’s crucial we can use all legal measures to protect our residents, especially our kids,” said Dando. “Parents deserve easy access to this information to be aware of dangerous predators who may be living close to parks, libraries, and schools in their neighborhoods.”

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Earlier this year, the San José City Council also expressed its deep concerns to the California Legislature and Attorney General Bill Lockyer regarding the current tracking system, the strain on local government to track sex offenders, and the importance of having a comprehensive and reliable statewide system for all communities.

Currently, individuals who are over the age of 18, have a valid drivers license, and are not themselves a registered sex offender must visit a sheriff's office or police station to view Megan's Law information on a CD, usually during limited hours and for a limited time.

"Placing this information about high-risk offenders on our police website will greatly supplement our current efforts to ensure the continued safety of our community," said Councilmember Cindy Chavez.

The San José Police Department has a specialized unit of officers that track sex offenders registered in the city. The six-member "290 Team," named after the penal code section under which sex offenders must register, was created in 1998.

This year alone the 290 Team has made 78 felony arrests, 11 misdemeanor arrests, and issued 85 warrants. Attorney General Lockyer has praised the work of San José Police as a statewide model that should be replicated in other cities.

Megan's Law was enacted in 1996 to provide the public with information about the location of dangerous sex offenders. The law was named for Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old girl from New Jersey who was raped and killed by a known child molester. Megan's parents were unaware that a violent sexual offender had moved across the street.

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