CALIFORNIA CITY POLICE BUST LARGE CLANDESTINE DRUG LAB

CALIFORNIA CITY – California City Police Officers arrested four people Saturday when a large hash oil lab was discovered set up inside a 2,400 square foot house in the 17000 block of Hacienda Blvd.

Around 11:00am, officers investigating suspicious activity at the residence smelled chemicals and saw equipment used for hash oil extraction. Officers set up a safety perimeter and called the California City Fire Department and Kern County Environmental Health hazardous materials team.

Following the issuance of a search warrant, officers found large amounts of hash oil and marijuana, over 100 gallons of flammable liquids, several 55 gallon chemical drums, glass beakers, butane, processing and extraction equipment, approximately 700 pounds of hazardous waste as well as hazardous alterations to the electrical system.

There was a potential for an explosion with the amount and types of chemicals found. Hash oil, also known as honey oil, is a concentrated form of cannabis. The drug can be produced using highly flammable solvents to extract the psychoactive THC from the cannabis plant. Residential buildings are not designed to safely house chemical laboratories or processes.

California City Code Enforcement has red tagged the house uninhabitable due to the conditions found.

The following people were arrested:
- Ricardo Chavez, 45 of Los Angeles
- Muhammad Kareem Zureick, 25 of Santa Monica
- Nicholas Boyarsky, 23 of Glendale
- Isaiah Umana, 22 of Los Angeles.

The operation concluded at 3:00am Sunday morning after hazardous materials teams from as far as Los Angeles responded to remove chemicals.

Charges include manufacturing a controlled substance, unlawful possession for sale, utilities theft, and hazardous waste violations.

The production of hash oil with volatile chemicals remains a felony in California.

Anyone with information about Saturday’s incident is encouraged to contact California City Police at (760) 373-8606.