

4 arrested in dual meth lab busts

Suspected meth labs were found Tuesday in two Mansfield homes. One person has been charged and three others might be soon.

METRICH confirmed two unrelated meth labs were found. The first home was at 311 E. Second St., and the second at 739 Bowman St.

Two women and a man were taken into custody at 739 Bowman St. around 2:30 p.m. One woman was wearing medical scrubs and the man was toting an oxygen tank.

Their names have not yet been released.

METRICH detective Perry Wheeler said he expects one or all of them to be charged with manufacturing methamphetamine, a first-degree felony, possessing chemicals to manufacture, and child endangering. Two children under the age of 18 were living in the home, he said.

The three were transported to the Mansfield Police Department for questioning.

Six 20-ounce chemical-filled plastic soda bottles were found in the home, Wheeler said. METRICH also found lithium, sodium hydroxide, iodised salt and rubber tubing in the home.

Preliminary testing at the scene was positive for ammonia, Wheeler said.

"It appears they've been manufacturing for a while," Wheeler said. "They had almost all of the components to manufacture."

Wheeler said a tip from a local pharmacy led to the discovery. The pharmacy tracks the amount of Sudafed sold at its store, and alerted police that one of the buyers might be using the drug illegally.

Another man was arrested at 311 E. Second St. early Tuesday.

Police were called to the home around 6:45 a.m. Tuesday for a domestic violence complaint. A woman there told officers her boyfriend of a couple months had threatened her repeatedly, according to a Mansfield police report.

When police contacted the suspect, 46-year-old James Redden, in the kitchen of the home, it appeared he was trying to conceal an item in a red bucket in the kitchen sink. When Redden stepped away, a vial with several small, white objects inside floated to the top of the bucket, the report said.

The man told police he didn't know the vial was in the bucket, and that he was just trying to soak his socks.

Preliminary testing of the white substance determined it was methamphetamine, the report said.

Redden was issued a felony warrant and transported to the Richland County Jail.

METRICH detectives arrived at the home later in the afternoon to search for other materials related to cooking methamphetamine, Wheeler said . They found several other chemicals in the home used to produce the drug, he said.

Redden was charged with manufacturing of methamphetamine and possessing chemicals to manufacture, Wheeler said.

Another home at 197 S. Diamond St. was reportedly involved, Wheeler said.

Details on how the home was related to the arrest at 311 E. Second St. have not yet been released.

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