

E-mail tips off Hayes Valley crack dealer

Police still nab suspect, after he fails to heed warning

BY OBSERVER STAFF

A San Francisco Housing Authority employee who read an office e-mail tipped off her husband about a drug investigation by local police a week before the man was arrested.

Despite the inside information, the suspect continued to pedal drugs from his home at the recently rebuilt Hayes Valley Apartments. San Francisco Police and Drug Enforcement Agents descended on Randy Minor's garage in the middle of a crack cocaine deal on June 14, at about 7:45 a.m., according to police.

Police also said Minor, 30, of 637 Buchanan St., is a member of

the Page Street Posse gang. He was charged with drug possession, drug possession for sale, maintaining a house where narcotics are used or sold and possession of a magazine for a semi-automatic .380-caliber pistol.

Inside the residence, an unattended infant was found in a crib. Minor later identified the child as his.

Police said Minor has an extensive record of narcotic violations related to sales and possession of drugs. Five crack cocaine rocks were booked into evidence from the arrest.

Sonya Williams, Minor's 25-year-old wife and the mother of five, who works for the San Francisco Housing Authority, arrived shortly after the arrest.

"There shouldn't be any more dope in here...I work at the

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CRIME

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Housing Authority and about a week ago, I seen an e-mail talking about large amounts of crack cocaine being sold from here and gang members with guns hangin' here," Williams was quoted as saying to officers in a police report about the incident.

"When I heard about that, I told (Minor) he better get that shit out of here, 'cause I can't jeopardize my job with the Housing Authority," said Williams, who works in the SFHA's legal division.

Housing Authority's General Counsel Carl Williams (no relation to Sonya Williams), said he has no idea how Sonya Williams might have seen the e-mail. Besides, he said, the e-mail in question referred to drug dealing and other safety problems at Hayes Valley Apartments in general and did not specify a search warrant was pending for 637 Buchanan St. He said an investi-



OBSERVER / CHRISTINE JEGAN

The rear of Randy Minor's apartment at 637 Buchanan St. was firebombed May 24. After his arrest June 14 for selling crack cocaine, work began on repairing the damage.

gation into the matter is something the police should handle.

Police said her tip-off affected the investigation as law enforcement officials worked to get a search warrant.

"We were compromised...they were aware of the pending war-

rant," Sgt. Marty Lalor of Northern Station said.

Trouble Signs

Police had received about 50 complaints in six months, ranging from disturbing the peace to a fire bombing at Minor's house located

near the corner of Hayes and Buchanan, Lalor said.

It is an intersection that police in recent months have targeted with more resources than any other in the Northern District due to its reputation as a bustling crack market.

Since the Hayes Valley Apartments reopened, the SFPD has received a host of complaints about suspicious activity and drug dealing at all hours of the day and night.

Police said Minor's house was "trashed" because he had been fixing automobiles there and the carpets and walls were stained with grease. And the home's back porch was scorched due to the firebombing on May 24.

More Inspections Needed

Carl Williams, of the Housing Authority, said Minor's arrest underscores the need for more inspections by McCormack Baron, the private management company that operates Hayes

Valley Apartments. He said they currently only hold annual inspections.

McCormack Baron, a nationwide company that manages Hayes Valley Apartments and other subsidized housing developments in 20 cities, is evaluating whether Minor and Sonya Williams will be evicted, according to Executive Vice President Tony Salazar.

"A housing authority employee actively knew this was going on and didn't report it," Salazar said. "That worries me — and I hope this sends a message to all residents. Whether they are employees, we don't take drugs lightly and we will work with police to make sure it doesn't happen again."

Screening Process

Minor, according to police, has an extensive record for drug sales violations, but since none of the violations were "active" he passed the screening process for prospective tenants at the publicly subsidized housing.

Salazar said the screening process bars management from checking arrests, and only allows checks for drug convictions going back three years.

If the housing authority agrees, he said McCormack Baron is more than willing to renegotiate its screening provisions in its management contract. McCormack Baron manages 10,000 units nationwide, and Salazar said properties they manage in other cities have a stricter screening process, such as no time limit for checking convictions.

"If it was up to us, we'd have stricter provisions," Salazar said.

Others Arrested

Also arrested on drug-related charges were Cleveland Webb, of 1037 McAllister St.; Wilma Seneca Long, 42, of 545 Grove St.; and Ellery Fore, 36, of 1726 Steiner St.

Police also found a bag containing crack on the backseat floor of a police car, where Fore was being held. Fore apparently wigged the baggy from his possession, police reports said.

Long, who was in the middle of buying a rock of crack when police and federal agents swooped in, told investigators she had known Minor for about five years and had bought crack cocaine from Minor about 200 times. She also said Minor's wife knew of the dealing, according to police reports.