

Victorville man suspected of operating marijuana lab at day care center

By Greg Cappis
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VICTORVILLE >> A man was arrested for allegedly operating a marijuana extraction lab in the garage of a home where he ran a child care center, according to authorities.

San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies also found two handguns — one reportedly stolen — in a bedroom when they searched the home in the 14000 block of Buckskin Court on Monday, according to a statement from the Sheriff's Department.

Five children, ages 1 to 5, attend the day care center, which is run by Ramona Meza, 43, of Victorville, the department said.

"When investigators initially arrived, two of the children were found unattended in the residence while Meza left to pick up the other children," the statement said. "(Child Protective Services) was notified and responded to the location, taking Meza's two children into protective custody."

The other three children were released to their parents.

The Sheriff's Department said Meza was booked into the High Desert Detention Center in Adelanto on suspicion of "several felony violations, including the manufacturing of concentrated cannabis, possession of stolen property/firearms and multiple counts of child endangerment."

Meza's booking information could not be located through an online search of booking or court records. The Sheriff's Department did not respond to a request for clarification.

The Sheriff's Department said deputies located about two ounces of concentrated cannabis, three pounds of processed marijuana and more than 90 canisters of butane and additional equipment used in the extraction process.

The butane is used to extract THC from marijuana to make concentrates, a process that has led to explosions.

In Muscoy last month, one person died and two others were injured when a home exploded. Investigators said the home housed an extraction lab.

The state's child care licensing board, which oversees child care centers, was notified of the Victorville investigation, according to the Sheriff's Department.

The state board did not respond to a request for comment Wednesday.