

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE



S.A.F.E. SEXUAL ASSAULT FELONY ENFORCEMENT

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SAFE TEAM NABS WANTED FUGITIVE IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Riverside, CA – Today, July 16, 2010, investigators with the Riverside County Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement (SAFE) task force arrested Leon Qualls, (DOB: 08/16/58) on three active felony arrest warrants totaling more than \$2 million. Two warrants were related to his failure to register as a sex offender and the third was for his failure to appear in court on an unrelated drug case.

During an eight-month investigation, the SAFE task force conducted surveillance at locations believed to be associated with Qualls in areas of Moreno Valley and Los Angeles. Through information gathered from those surveillance operations, investigators were able to pinpoint Qualls' location in the City of Escalon in San Joaquin County.

With the assistance of the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department and the Escalon Police Department, Qualls was taken into custody early this morning after he was found hiding in the backyard of an Escalon residence. He had been a fugitive and his location unknown to authorities since March 2008. He was booked into the San Joaquin County Jail and will be transported to Riverside County sometime next week.

In 1995, Qualls, of Moreno Valley, was convicted of committing lewd and lascivious acts with a child under 14 and was required to register as a sex offender.

The SAFE team is a collaboration of multi-disciplined law enforcement agencies including the Riverside County District Attorney's Office, Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Riverside County Probation Department, California State Parole, California Department of Justice, Banning Police Department and Corona Police Department.

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