

Officials: Inmate sold drugs at jail

Sneaked them in past the guards

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An inmate released on furlough to witness the birth of his child returned to jail with not only a few nice memories, but also allegedly with illegal drugs he later sold to fellow inmates, according to county officials.

The name of the suspected inmate has not been released pending the outcome of an ongoing investigation, Sullivan County Department of Corrections Superintendent Ross Cunningham said.

"The sheriff's department is investigating now and the county attorney is aware of the case," Cunningham said.

During a non-public meeting April 29, the county commissioners were made aware of up to 11 inmates who allegedly consumed buprenorphine, a fast-acting prescription drug that can create a heroin-like high. The minutes of that meeting were recently unsealed.

According to Cunningham, he has observed a significant increase in the use of the drug, known as "bupe" on the street.

"It seems to be the new fad drug out there," Cunningham said.

Through an outside source, Cunningham discovered that an inmate allegedly brought the drug into the jail after being temporarily released for the birth of his child at a local hospital.

The inmate allegedly received an unknown number of pills during an exchange in the hospital parking lot.

Cunningham said he believes the inmate swallowed a small baggie or condom containing the pills to get the drugs past security once he returned.

Other information received indicates that the inmate drank a bottle of shampoo to force himself to vomit so he could retrieve the drugs. Once retrieved, the drugs were allegedly sold to 11 other inmates within the facility.

"We believe he sold them, but we don't know the value," Cunningham said.

Cunningham said he received information about the drugs on April 25 and conducted drug tests on 14 inmates. Eleven of the tests were positive and were sent to a lab for confirmation.

"We did a urinalysis on the inmates, but were not able to confirm the use of the drug from the lab," Cunningham said.

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said.

Since this incident, Cunningham said he has not had any other drug problems within the jail.

"We've increased the number of random urinalysis and

that keeps them on their toes," Cunningham said.

Cunningham said he expects the inmate who allegedly brought the drugs into the jail to face criminal charges.

"Our hopes are to also go after the supplier," Cunningham said.

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