

DIVISION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
Attorney General

November 1, 2012



PO Box 201417
2225 Eleventh Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-1417
(406) 444-3874
FAX: (406) 444-2759

FROM: Mike Batista, Administrator, Division of Criminal Investigation

RE: Address Verification and Non-Compliant Sexual Offenders in Montana

To Whom It May Concern:

As the administrator responsible for the management of Montana's Sexual or Violent Offender Registry, I provide the following information on the process law enforcement uses and the progress we have made in ensuring that the Registry provides accurate information about where offenders live.

The Montana Sexual or Violent Offender Registry database includes 8,048 offenders of all types.

Of those, 3,742 are registered sexual or sexual and violent offenders. An additional 4,306 are registered violent offenders.

Offenders are further classified as either "active" or "inactive." Active means the offenders are living in communities. Inactive means the offenders are in a secure setting such as a jail/treatment program or prison -- or they have moved out of state.

As of today, the number of sexual or sexual and violent offenders whose addresses are not verified by local authorities is 92 or 2.5 percent of all the sexual or sexual and violent offenders in the database. That represents 4.2 percent of all the active sexual or sexual and violent offenders in the database.

We are proud of that success, but we continually work to reduce the number of unverified offender addresses. Each week, staff at the Montana Sexual or Violent Offender Registry sends out approximately 125 address verification letters to registered sex and violent offenders throughout Montana. Offenders have 30 days to return these letters, confirming that they live at the address they have provided. If staff does not hear from them in the time allotted, the

offender is termed "non-compliant." However, in almost all cases, investigators find that "non-compliant" offenders are living at the address listed in the database.

- Non designated offenders must verify their addresses annually.
- Tier I offenders must verify their annually.
- Tier II offenders must verify their address every 180 days.
- Tier III offenders must verify their addresses every 90 days.

As you would expect, nationally and in Montana, many sexual and violent offenders are unresponsive to law enforcement. Statutorily, the task of tracking down those who do not respond to the letter falls to local law enforcement. To assist them, we created the SVOR Compliance Unit within the Division of Criminal Investigation in August 2011. Two investigators and an analyst now assist local authorities in meeting their responsibility to track down these offenders and ensure they are living in accordance with their court orders.

On October 31, 2011, there were 275 sex offenders who were not compliant. A year later, on November 1, 2012, that number has been reduced to 92.

The number of offenders tracked by the SVOR grows every year. On average, 81 new offenders are added each month, for an annual total of approximately 972 new registered offenders each year.

Since verification letters go out every week, each week a whole new batch of offenders is added to the pool local law enforcement is responsible for tracking down. Through the efforts of the SVOR Compliance Unit, which sends investigators into communities throughout Montana to knock on doors, the Department of Justice is providing vital assistance to local agencies in keeping track of sex offenders so that Montana families can have confidence in the Sexual or Violent Offender Registry.