



Contraband Recovered at Green Haven Correctional Facility

Drone Utilized to Drop Cell Phones, Marijuana into Yard

For Immediate Release

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Stormville, NY – In December, staff recovered more than two pounds of marijuana and five cell phones with charging equipment during three separate contraband investigations, including one incident involving a drone drop into an outside yard.

First Incident – December 17 (Drone Drop):

At approximately 3:35 a.m., a sergeant walking through the facility parking lot heard and

observed a drone flying overhead. The drone was seen hovering over one of the facilities outside yards before flying west, away from the prison.

At approximately 7:00 a.m., an officer conducting a yard search discovered two volleyballs with fishing lines and zip ties attached. The volleyballs were brought inside for inspection and found to have been cut open, filled, and resewn, with white tape covering the seams.

Upon opening the volleyballs, staff recovered the following:

- **First volleyball:** 16 bundles containing approximately one pound of a green leafy substance believed to be marijuana, two vials of Grabba (tobacco leaf), and one USB charger.
- **Second volleyball:** Three iPhones, three charging cables, two vials of Grabba, and one folding ceramic blade.

Second Incident – December 22:

During a suspicious cell search, an inmate was ordered to exit his cell. The inmate refused, turned away from staff, and was observed holding an object in his hand. Staff entered the cell and attempted to restrain the inmate, who resisted by interlocking his hands underneath his body while still holding the object.

Additional officers responded and were able to force the inmate's arms free and recover the object, which was determined to be a cell phone. The inmate was handcuffed, brought to his feet, and escorted to the Special Housing Unit for evaluation.

During the evaluation, staff determined the inmate had an object in his mouth. The inmate spit out a ceramic razor, which was recovered.

Four officers were injured during the struggle. Three officers sustained hand, forearm, shoulder, and back injuries. They were treated by facility medical staff and remained on duty.

The fourth officer sustained a knee injury and was transported to Vassar Brothers Medical Center for further treatment.

Following the incident, staff searched the inmate's cell and recovered a cell phone charger.

Third Incident – December 28 (Visitor Smuggling):

While conducting routine rounds, an officer detected the odor of marijuana in the administration frisk area. During a search, multiple black bundles wrapped in electrical tape were discovered underneath a bench.

A review of surveillance footage revealed the following sequence of events:

- An inmate in the visiting room, delivering Christmas presents to visitors, punched a hole in one of the presents and handed it to a second inmate.
- The second inmate passed the present to a female visitor.

- The visitor was observed removing objects from inside her shirt and placing them into the hole in the present before handing it back.
- The present was returned to the first inmate, who removed the objects, concealed them inside his pants, and later transferred them into a plastic bag.
- The inmate exited the visiting room and entered the administration frisk area, where he removed the contraband from the bag and placed it under a bench.

The recovered bundles contained over one pound of marijuana and three cell phone charging cables. Subsequent searches of both inmates' cells resulted in the recovery of a cell phone hidden inside a soap box, a tablet charger, 81 grams of marijuana, and 124 sheets of liquid-stained paper.

All contraband was secured as evidence, and the investigations remain ongoing.

“The significance of the drugs and cell phone recoveries by staff cannot be understated. Any type of contraband in the hands of inmates poses a serious threat to staff safety,” said Joe Horacek, NYSCOPBA Mid-Hudson Region Vice President. “The sergeant and officers involved in all three investigations did an excellent job preventing drugs, cell phones, and weapons from getting into the hands of inmates. The sergeant who observed the drone and the officer who recovered the volleyballs should be commended for their actions. NYSCOPBA strongly supports language contained within the Governor’s proposed executive budget for fiscal year 2026-2027 which criminalizes the use of drones within 500 feet of correctional facilities, and we call on the Legislature to adhere to this proposal as a means to stifle the efforts of those who seek to introduce contraband into our workplaces.”