

# T O R R A N C E

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## *Press Release* *Police Department*

### **School Bomb Threat Suspect Arrested DR05-18050**

On December 2, 2005, Torrance Police officers arrested a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Calle Mayor Middle School student for phoning in a total of eight bomb threats to various Torrance Unified School District schools between November 22, 2005 and December 1, 2005. Calle Mayor Middle School, the suspect's intended target, received six of the eight phone threats.

The first calls were recorded messages left after school hours on Wednesday, November 22, on the Calle Mayor Middle School and Arnold Elementary School phone systems. However, these messages were not retrieved until Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, when the schools were back in session after the Thanksgiving Holiday. The suspect continued to call in threats each school day until he was arrested.

Though the content of each phone threat varied slightly, the suspect's primary theme was that there was a bomb at or near the school, it was going to explode and people were going to die. Some calls specified the bomb's alleged location and others did not. One of the calls even included a demand that \$1 million be placed in a locker at Calle Mayor Middle School.

Torrance Police School Resource Officers Kelly Stovall and Steve Jenkinson working in a collaborative effort with Torrance Unified School District administrators developed information that led to the suspect. Officers Stovall and Jenkinson arrested the suspect after he made incriminating statements during an investigative interview. The suspect admitted making the phone threats stating that he did so because he did not want to go to school.

The public resources expended for each of the phone threats was extensive. Numerous Torrance Police, Torrance Fire, and Torrance Unified School District personnel were involved in the various threat incidents. These personnel had to treat each threat very seriously and take exhaustive measures to ensure the well-being of the students. People's lives could have been endangered and thousands of tax dollars were wasted due to the safety personnel that were taken away from their normal duties to attend to these false threats. Additionally, valuable classroom time was lost and students were distracted from their learning because of one young person's actions.

Members of the Torrance Police Department worked diligently to solve this case. It is a very serious offense and criminal charges will be sought through the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. In addition to criminal charges, school officials will likely take disciplinary action and the City of Torrance may seek restitution for the expended resources.

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