

Local Facebook Alert Draws Attention

(KNZA)--A Facebook message, apparently originating from a local resident, is alleging that a car seat, left on the side of U.S. Highway 73, in Brown County, is accompanied by masked men hiding in the vicinity. "We received a report Friday at about 6 p.m., in the vicinity of U.S. 73 and Sunflower, that a motorist noticed a car seat along the side of the road, it had a purple blanket over the top, and it made it appear that a child was still in the seat," Brown County Sheriff John Merchant told MSC News. "When the [motorist] went to check on the seat it was reported that two people in dark blue jeans and masks exited the ditch and headed towards the vehicle. The motorist jumped in, drove away. The motorist was safe, thank goodness. It concerned them that they were using a child in danger as a ruse to get people to stop."

Merchant says authorities have not yet secured any evidence related to the reported incident. "Law enforcement officers from Atchison Sheriff's Office, Brown County Sheriff's Office, and the Horton Police Department responded, didn't find anyone or anything, that could elude to the fact that we could identify who these folks were, but we think we're obligated to alert the public that if they see anything of a similar nature, instead of stopping, they need to call 911 immediately. If it's a joke, it's not funny."

Merchant points out that while similar [stories](#) have been circulated [online](#) for a number of years, the local case remains under investigation. "This is a ruse that's been going on for, I think the earliest we've found out was like 2009, in other parts of the country, in other states in the United States, so it's not a new one...but in the event we're having people do this, as always, we want the public kept safe. There's even been rumors that there's been reports of similar issues within the last day or two [elsewhere] on 73 Highway, that everybody's reported they called in, but at the Sheriff's Office, we have not received any calls of those type of complaints. I want to nip this in the bud so it doesn't get overextended to where people are panicking."

Merchant says motorists should always err on the side of caution, and notify law enforcement instead of stopping in such a situation.

Many Signals Communications