

Young child tests positive for meth use



Tammy Ellis and Mary Starling/Credit: Atchison Co Sheriff's Office

(KAIR)--A report of an intoxicated 72-year-old man walking the streets of Effingham led to two arrests and to the discovery that a young child tested positive for methamphetamine use. "Honestly it's pretty disgusting, and sad, for the child who has no clue of what's going on," Atchison County Sheriff Jack Laurie told MSC News, adding that his office responded to 511 Howard Street, in Effingham, around 7:40 Thursday morning. "There was a complaint called in about a gentleman walking through Effingham, and was saying that he was drugged. When deputies responded they actually called for EMS and had EMS transport him to get him detoxed. During the investigation, and talking to the subject, we found where he had come from and were able to obtain a search warrant for the residence."

Laurie said the search warrant was executed around 2:30 Thursday afternoon at 708 George Street, in Effingham, leading to the arrests of 42-year-old Tammy Ellis and 64-year-old Mary Starling, who both reside in Effingham.

At that same time, Laurie said deputies located the 6-year-old child in the home. "We were familiar with that address as we had done a few welfare checks on the child over there in the last year and worked with DCF on that. We figured there was still the child living there and wanted to check on this situation anyway. Come to find out, that child was still there, and unfortunately the child had not been enrolled in school. An additional charge is coming for aggravated battery [because] the child tested positive for meth."

It's not immediately clear which of the two arrested serves as the legal guardian for the child. "It's not clear right now where the parents are, but she's been the guardian for sometime now."

Both Ellis and Starling were taken into custody on charges including possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, and aggravated endangerment of a child.

Follow their arrests, the pair was booked into the Atchison County Jail.

Laurie said the child was taken into protective custody. "Hopefully, she can get to a better place and find more to life than just sitting inside of a house where drug activity is."

The child has been temporarily placed by Juvenile Intake and the Kansas Department for Children and Families.

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