

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rat poison and liquor seized during shakedown involving another Parchman work camp

JACKSON –A significant amount of contraband items, including rat poison, liquor in plastic water bottles, and cigarette lighters, were seized during a shakedown at three Parchman units, including another work camp, Thursday morning.

Officers conducted the shakedown at Unit 25, which is for inmates in the Pre-Release Program; Unit 28, which is a work camp; and Unit 31, which is for inmates with disabilities. Collectively, 477 inmates were housed in the three locations at the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

Most of the contraband, however, came from the work camp, where 191 offenders were assigned, when officers searched.

“It appears contraband is being trafficked through staff members, visitors and inmates while on work detail,” Commissioner Pelicia E. Hall said. “As part of Operation Zero Tolerance, the trafficking will be addressed. A preliminary investigation already has confirmed some sources.”

Seventy-five cigarette lighters were found in a pipe chase. They can go for \$25 each. It appears that the rat poison confiscated is being mixed with drugs, such as marijuana, which could be toxic and lethal to offenders, if ingested.

One inmate was spooked as officers arrived early morning. He was observed running from a perimeter fence back into a building. Drugs and liquor were found on him during a subsequent search.

Other contraband items found include tobacco, cigarettes, Top paper, cellphones, cellphone chargers and related items.

“If we find an item that is not on an inmate’s allowable list, it will be confiscated,” Hall said.

Hall started the shakedowns in March to decrease the amount of contraband for the safety of staff and inmates. Last week, a significant amount of contraband was found at Unit 26, a work camp at Parchman.

Any facility in the prison system is subject to an unannounced visit under Operation Zero Tolerance, Hall said.