

Trooper Aiding "Disabled" Motorist Arrests California Man for Marijuana

by Cheryl McDermott

A California man was arrested in southeast Bend on multiple charges Wednesday night when police found almost one pound of marijuana as they were offering assistance to what was thought to be a disabled motorist.

About 8:15 p.m. Wednesday, October 25, Oregon State Police (OSP) Trooper Rich Brannine stopped near Knott and Pine Vista to see if a man standing next to a red 1995 Chevy Suburban with California plates needed assistance. The trooper noted an "obvious odor of marijuana" and found a small amount of the drug on the suspect, and a larger amount inside a bag in the vehicle.

According to an OSP news release, about 14 ounces of marijuana and fake identification were found on his person or in his vehicle.

Santos Benitez, 31, of Stockton, California was arrested and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail. He likely will face charges of manufacturing, possession, and delivery of a controlled substance; plus two counts of possession of a forged instrument.

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