

Meth dealers sentenced to max under Measure 57

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

BENTON COUNTY, Ore. -- Attorney General John Kroger today announced that two major Willamette Valley methamphetamine traffickers received the maximum prison sentences under Oregon sentencing guidelines.

Raul Oropeza-Juarez (left), and Efren Moreno-Vasquez (right) - mugshots

A Benton County judge sentenced Efren Moreno-Vasquez and Raul Oropeza-Juarez to three years in prison each with no possibility of early release. The two men were each convicted earlier this month of one count of Unlawful Distribution of Methamphetamine.

The sentence is one of the first under Measure 57, the 2008 voter-approved initiative that toughened sentences for drug and property crimes. Before Measure 57, the two men likely would have been sentenced to probation.

The evidence at trial showed that Moreno-Vasquez and Oropeza-Juarez operated a major meth distribution center out of a house in Monroe, which is near Corvallis. A street dealer testified that he purchased for resale one ounce of meth once a day, five days a week for four months. That's more than 5,000 doses of meth worth approximately \$160,000 in street sales.

Prosecutors alleged that the distribution center had been operating for years and at least half a dozen street dealers from Eugene to Salem regularly bought drugs from the house.

The house was busted in January by a Drug Enforcement Administration-led task force. In addition to 7 ounces of meth, they found two firearms.

Sr. Assistant Attorney General Andrew Campbell from the Department of Justice's Organized Crime Unit prosecuted the case.

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