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LAPD Officer Arrested After Allegedly Selling \$4,200 Worth Of Methamphetamine To Federal Informant

A Los Angeles police officer was arrested on suspicion of distributing methamphetamine this week after a confidential informant set up a drug buy in San Diego County that was monitored by U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents, according to the U.S. Attorney's office in San Diego. Yoshio Romero, a five-year veteran of the Los Angeles Police Department who was assigned to the Southeast Division, was arrested Monday at his home in Corona, according to federal and LAPD officials.

According to a federal affidavit, the confidential informant alleged that Romero had offered to sell any quantity of meth, including pounds, and even gave the informant a free sample in December. Later that month the informant set up a buy in the parking lot of the North County Fair Mall in Escondido.

The officer allegedly placed nearly 114 grams of meth in an unlocked pickup truck registered to his name and told the buyer to grab it and leave \$4,200 in cash in the vehicle's center console. The affidavit alleges that Romero was seen later driving off in the truck.

Interestingly, DEA agents apparently did not inform the LAPD about its investigation until April, according to a department statement: "At that time, the LAPD launched an internal administrative investigation and cooperated fully with the DEA to support their criminal case."

It's been a bad year for the department when it comes to alleged officer misconduct: So far in 2010 two off-duty officers have been arrested in a suspected, off-duty pistol-whipping, a detective was charged with embezzling \$30,000 from the department, and one officer died in a suspected DUI crash.

Romero was due in federal court in San Diego Thursday.