
NEWS RELEASE

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BOMB HOAX ARREST 1200 NORTH COUNTRY CLUB ROAD

On April 25, 2013 at 1:39 p.m., officers from Operations Division Midtown responded to a report of a suspicious canvass bag in the parking lot of HOPE located at 1200 North Country Club Road. One of the calls made to 911 in regards to this incident came from a female who advised there was a bomb in a bag in the HOPE parking lot. As officers arrived on scene, a suspicious bag was located in the parking lot. The HOPE facility was evacuated, as was over 200 students from AmeriSchool located at 1150 North Country Club. Officers set up a large perimeter and shut down multiple streets to ensure the safety of the citizens in the area. The Tucson Police Department EOD Unit responded, as well as detectives from the Special Investigations Division. As EOD personnel worked to examine the contents of the suspicious bag, SID Detectives began interviewing all potential witnesses in the area. Several witnesses reported seeing the bag in the parking lot as early as 8:00 a.m. that morning. One witness advised that she saw a male drop the bag in place just prior to police arriving. She gave specific details to detectives to include a description of the suspect and statements made by the suspect that the bag contained a bomb. Detectives were not able to verify her account of the incident.

At about 4:45 p.m., EOD personnel were able to examine the suspicious bag and determine that there were no explosives inside of it. The roads were opened soon after and evacuees from HOPE were allowed back into the building. The children from AmeriSchool were taken to Himmel Park and parents picked them up from there. SID Detectives worked through the evening to locate further witnesses, review video surveillance and search for any physical evidence to verify the account given by the witness who stated a suspect left the bag and advised her it contained a bomb. They determined that all information given to police by this witness was false. Their investigation revealed that this witness not only gave false information to police on scene regarding this suspect, but she was also the 911 caller who reported that there was a bomb in a bag outside the HOPE facility. This witness was identified as 46-year old Esther Bergin. She was arrested and booked into the Pima County Jail for 1 count of Hoax, a class 4 felony. A booking photograph is included below.

The Tucson Police Department will respond with caution to all bomb threats or suspicious objects calls to ensure the safety of citizens in the area. The Special Investigations Unit conducts investigations into each and every one of these incidents. If it is determined that a person intentionally or knowingly causes the impression that an act of terrorism is

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taking place or will take place and causes an emergency response, that person may face felony charges and per Arizona Revised Statute, may also be held accountable for costs associated with perpetuating the hoax.



Esther Bergin

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For accommodations; materials in accessible formats; foreign language interpreters; and/or materials in a language other than English, please contact the Tucson Police Department Public Information Office at (520) 791-4852 or (520) 791-2639 for TDD at least five (5) business days in advance. Para arreglos; materiales en formatos accesibles; interpretes de idioma extranjero; y/o materiales en otro idioma que no sea inglés, por favor comunicarse al Departamento de la Policía de Tucson a la sección de Información Pública al (520) 791-4852 o (520) 791-2639 para TDD por lo menos con cinco (5) días hábiles de anticipació.