

# Sex-crime offenders classified into tiers

Police here say all tiers are held to the same standard.

BY NICOLE MARSHALL  
World Staff Writer

One year has passed since Oklahoma began classifying sex offenders into a three-level ranking system that designates how long they must register their addresses with law enforcement authorities.

Creating the tier system was one step toward complying with the federal Adam Walsh Act by the deadline of July 2009 to avoid losing a percentage of the state's federal funding.

Under a state law that went into effect Nov. 1, 2007, offenders are placed in tiers based on their numeric risk levels, which are determined by the type and severity of crimes for which they were convicted and the number of convictions they have.

Level One offenders will register for 15 years; Level Two offenders will register for 25 years; and Level Three offenders will register for life.

But because the tier system is not tied to anything other than the length of time an offender must register, the law has had little effect locally, said Detective Tim Lawson, who maintains the Tulsa Police Department's sex-offender registry.

"There has been zero effect because there is no discrepancy between the tiers," he said. "They are all held accountable to the same standard."

Some states base the number of restrictions with which offenders must comply on their potential risk to the public.

About 370 sex offenders are registered in Tulsa, and no increase or decrease in the number of registrations has been seen in Tulsa since the law took effect, Lawson said.

Now that one year has passed, police will be able to use new computer software to determine the breakdown of those offenders into the three tiers, he said.

The largest number of offenders falls into the tier designated as having the highest risk.

In Oklahoma, 844 offenders have been assigned by the Department of Corrections to Level One; 218 to Level Two; and 2,578 to Level Three, said Lawana Hamrick, coordinator of the DOC's Sex and Violent Offender Registration Unit.

Hamrick said the tier system is not popular with sex offenders because it makes the time of registration longer for some of them.

While the tier system is Oklahoma's first step in coming into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act, the state will have to take additional measures to be in compliance, she said.

The Tulsa County Sheriff's Office and nine area police agencies announced last week that they are taking part in a regional database, OffenderWatch, that tracks sex offenders in their jurisdictions.

Sheriff Stanley Glanz said the database brings those agencies into compliance with the Adam Walsh Act's requirements regarding registries.

Tulsa County Chief Deputy George Haralson said 107 sex offenders are registered as living in the unincorporated areas of the county. Of that number, 19 are in Level One; 2 are in Level Two; and 86 are in Level Three. Two offenders have not yet been assigned to a tier, he said.

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# Guard commander will speak in Owasso

Saturday's Veterans Day event will also include school choirs.

BY RHETT MORGAN  
World Staff Writer

OWASSO — Brig. Gen. Myles Deering, commander of the 45th Infantry Brigade, Oklahoma Army National Guard, will be the honored speaker Nov. 8 at the Owasso Veterans Day Cer-

emony. The event, which will start at 11 a.m. at the Veteran's Memorial in the Owasso Sports Park, 10320 E. 116th St. North, will mark Deering's first public speaking engagement since his recent return from Iraq, said Chelsea Harkins, the city's director of economic development.

Municipal officials will present a wreath to honor the war dead. The event will feature local school choirs, buglers and a

color guard, and veterans will be recognized at a special ceremony. Deering, 56, returned three weeks ago from commanding 2,600 Oklahoma National Guard troops in Iraq for the past nine months. It was the guard's largest mobilization since the Korean War. Deering has been the 45th Infantry Brigade's commander for four years. In September 2005, he led more than 2,500 Oklahoma Guard soldiers in assisting New

Orleans after Hurricane Katrina hit. Deering recently was named to a top spot at the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. He will take his new position Dec. 12 as the director of manpower and personnel. The promotion will give Deering a second star, making him a major general.

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