

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: March 11, 2011

SHERIFF ARPAIO ORDERS TENT CITY SHAKEDOWN

(Phoenix, AZ) A shakedown of inmates in the Tent City Jail and the Durango complex jails, as well as visitors coming into the parking lots today will begin at 4:00 PM. Over 100 Maricopa County Sheriff's Deputies, Detention Officers, and members of the Sheriff's Posse, including actor Steven Segal, will be searching for any contraband being brought to inmates.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio says his aim in this shakedown is to be vigilant in ensuring that no contraband is brought into the Maricopa County Jails, which helps to avoid any potential problems of violence by the inmates.

Tent City has the capability to house over 2,500 inmates, and currently also houses about 100 illegal immigrants serving their sentence.

It has been 18 years since Sheriff Joe Arpaio opened Tent City, the most unique and talked about jail in the country. Since its high noon opening on a very hot August 3, 1993, over 500,000 men and women have served their sentences in the Tents Jail.

Tent City inmates have endured the broiling Arizona desert temperatures and below freezing temperatures in winter. Most inmates work inside the jail facilities while others serve time on the Sheriff's controversial male and female chain gangs.

Inmates have always been fed very low cost meals (average meal cost looms around 80 cents per day) because of the Sheriff's aggressive search for inexpensive food items and gleaned products.

Yet even with these harsh, austere conditions, Tent City has enjoyed a largely trouble free existence in the past 18 years.

Sheriff Arpaio says "By conducting search operations like this, we can continue to ensure the safety of our officers and inmates".

News Release

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