Detectives Conduct Operation to Curb Holiday Shoplifting

Yesterday plain clothed detectives with the Department’s Economic Crimes and C.O.T.A. Units conducted a one day operation with loss prevention officers at the Wal-Mart Store located at 201 34th Street North. The purpose of the operation was to address the problem of shoplifting that increases during the holiday season.

A total of 19 individuals were arrested, mostly on charges of retail theft although several had outstanding warrants and one juvenile was in violation of court ordered home detention for a previous burglary charge. Of those arrested, 9 were adults and 10 were juveniles.

In one instance three juvenile were arrested when they attempted to steal a bicycle parked in front of the store while plain clothed detectives stood about 5 feet away.

Operations of this type are being planned in the future at other retail establishment in the hopes of deterring shoplifting and other forms of theft at stores city wide.

Information released by Mike Puetz, 727-893-7550, michael.puetz@stpete.org