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## **Shotguns Seized From Man Arming Against Government Takeover**

*Told police COVID-19 is an elaborate hoax to allow the tracking of Americans*

The San Diego City Attorney's Office has obtained a Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO) against a 52-year-old Rancho Peñasquitos man who made bizarre and threatening social media posts relating to COVID-19. Three unregistered shotguns were seized from the respondent's home.

Multiple calls were made to the San Diego Police Department regarding the respondent's conduct after he told family and friends about his plan to arm himself during the pandemic, claiming COVID-19 is a hoax to scare Americans into getting a vaccine that would allow them to be tracked by 5G towers.

**“Stress from the COVID-19 public health crisis is exacerbating anxiety and mental health struggles for many,”** City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“Thanks to public vigilance, police were able to safely intervene and remove firearms from someone who presented a danger to himself and others before he resorted to violence.”**

After trying to purchase ammunition and being denied, the respondent reportedly was enraged by what he believed was a “government plan” orchestrated by people who were targeting him. He was reported to have said, “I guess I’m going to have to take things into my own hands.”

When police and a mental health professional went to his home, the respondent appeared to exhibit psychotic and delusional behavior and was determined to be a danger to others. He stated that he needed to arm himself against Microsoft founder Bill Gates and the government, who were using COVID-19 to scare Americans into getting a vaccine that would allow them to be tracked by 5G towers. In response to questions, the respondent was said to be aggressive and confrontational, ranting and fidgeting. At one point he said, “People are going to try and get me and I need to defend myself!” He was apprehended for evaluation and placed on a 72-hour psychiatric hold.

The City Attorney's Office launched California's first comprehensive gun violence restraining order program in December 2017. Since the program's inception, the Office has obtained more than 300 GVROs against individuals who posed a threat to themselves and others, including stalkers, disgruntled employees, and potential mass shooters. Courts have removed more than 500 firearms, including 40 assault weapons. A GVRO is a powerful tool, proven to thwart violence at schools, in our neighborhoods, and in the workplace. These orders are commonly sought to prevent fatalities in domestic violence situations as well as attempted suicides.

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