



PRESS RELEASE

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MASSIVE HAUL OF FAKE DVD AND NINTENDO GAMES

Sandwell Council Trading Standards and West Midlands Police, assisted by investigators from FACT (Federation Against Copyright Theft), seized fake DVDs and Nintendo Wii games with street value of nearly £300,000 in a raid on a property in the Rowley Regis area of Sandwell last week.

Counterfeit copies of recent films including The Mummy 3, The Dark Knight and Mamma Mia and Nintendo Wii games such as Mario Olympics and NBA 08 were among items captured.

Following intelligence received from FACT, an early morning raid at the property last Thursday (November 27) saw the seizure of a substantial quantity of 'master' discs capable of being used to produce multiple copies of well-known films and games. Officers started at 5.30am and were still working until 10.30pm.

Around 9,000 discs with an estimated street value of £250,000 were seized with approximately 1,000 Nintendo Wii games with a market value estimated at up to 40,000. Top quality printing and computer hardware were also seized.

Two people were arrested and bailed pending further investigations and are facing criminal charges.

Councillor Mahboob Hussain, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for neighbourhoods & housing, said: "Sandwell Trading Standards has developed an excellent reputation for targeting and stamping out illegal activity involved with the counterfeiting and piracy of computer software.

"Such illegal trade damages legitimate businesses and deceives the public who receive poor quality inferior goods."

Sandwell Council's Trading Standards Manager Bob Robinson said: "Anyone in Sandwell who is either trading in counterfeit goods, or even thinking of doing so, should beware - you could be next to receive an early morning call!

"We are determined to protect legitimate business and adequately protect the public from becoming the recipient of sub-standard products."

Kieron Sharp, Director General of FACT, said: "The trade in counterfeit DVDs over the internet is not a harmless activity but serious and organised criminality that FACT is working to attack in conjunction with law enforcement agencies across the UK.

This criminality affects the livelihoods of the tens of thousands of people who work in the UK film and TV industries.

"I would like to thank West Midlands Police and Sandwell Trading Standards for their assistance and their continued efforts to fight this problem."

Michael Rawlinson, Deputy Director General of ELSPA, commented: "Software counterfeiting is not just a back bedroom scam, but a serious offence, often with links to organised crime.

"ELSPA would like to thank Sandwell Trading Standards for their work in bringing this investigation to a successful conclusion, helping to protect local traders and the general community from the effects of pirated goods."

To report the manufacture or sale of counterfeit DVDs call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or contact your local Safer Neighbourhoods team.

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