

Only 1 sex offender hasn't moved away from schools

By RYAN SMITH
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Compliance for a law requiring sex offenders to move at least 1,000 feet away from schools and day care facilities is close to complete.

Only one of 39 registered sex offenders in Cole County found in violation of the law still is living less than 1,000 feet from a school or day care, but that individual is contracted to relocate by Sept. 21, Prosecutor Bill Tackett said.

"Part of what you do as a prosecutor is set the stage for compli-

ance," said Tackett. "We've seen a best case scenario in that we've had people voluntarily comply."

In July, Tackett mailed notices to 39 sex offenders – who lived too close to Cole County schools and day care centers – that informed them they had until classes started to move.

The actual language of the law passed last year says that people who have been convicted of any of a number of sex-related crimes "shall not establish residency within 1,000 feet of any public school ... private school (up to the 12th grade) or child-care facility ... which is in existence at the time such residency is established."

In recent weeks, Tackett gave maps, offender information and other materials to the Jefferson City Police Department and the Cole County Sheriff's Office regarding those in violation.

But almost every person on the list had moved or was in the process of moving.

Some offenders who had lived within the same 1,000-foot zone before the law came into effect told Tackett they were planning to move because of pressure from neighbors.

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