

ANCHORAGE

No changes to sex offender registry compliance for a while, troopers say

Despite the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling Wednesday that the Alaska Department of Public Safety's online Sex Offender Registry is not an unconstitutional punishment even when applied retroactively, nothing changes for the time being, Alaska State Troopers said Thursday.

Several ex-convicts called the troopers' Palmer office Thursday "wondering what they were supposed to do now," said spokesman Greg Wilkinson.

"At this time, there is no action necessary by those offenders," Wilkinson said.

The case, involving two Alaska sex offenders released from prison in 1990, four years before the registry law was enacted, is back with the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

That court had ruled in the two men's favor, and last year a judge issued an injunction to the department, ordering the names of 2,954 offenders convicted before 1994 -- including the appellants John Doe I and John Doe II -- to be blocked on the registry.

"The 9th Circuit Court must first remove the injunction" before troopers can re-instate those pre-1994 sex offenders, Wilkinson said. "Once that injunction is removed, notice will be sent out as to a time schedule sex offenders will be required to follow in becoming compliant with the law."

Alaska Attorney General Gregg Renkes said the state will soon ask the 9th Circuit to let it publish those nearly 3,000 names.

Almost 1,600 registrants convicted after the registry was created were unaffected by the ruling. Their names are currently listed on the Web-based registry.

The case of the two Alaskans may be appealed yet again to the Supreme Court. The 9th Circuit identified other potential constitutional issues regarding the state's law. Renkes said the case is perhaps a year or more from resolution.

-- Anchorage Daily News