



ATF NIBIN Program Hits of the Week

May 27 to June 20, 2002



NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

Week of 6/17: Indiana law enforcement agencies have used NIBIN successfully to solve gang-related shootings in their areas. Lake County Sheriff's deputies responded to the scene of a drive-by shooting, recovering seven cartridge casings from the scene and submitted them for NIBIN entry. Two weeks later, in Gary, Indiana, a small child was killed in a drive-by shooting. Gary Police Department officers recovered eighteen cartridge casings and several fired bullets at the scene, and they were imaged into NIBIN. Correlation revealed a potential link between the cases, a link that was later confirmed by firearms examiners. After the discovery of the link, the FBI gang task force began investigating illicit activities associated with the Latin Kings street gang. The NIBIN hit helped to show linkages between gang members and the criminal acts committed. Several high-ranking gang members were indicted and subsequently found guilty of various Federal offenses.

Week of 6/10: As this week's hit illustrates, Texas law enforcement agencies have gained valuable intelligence information through NIBIN, developing leads on crimes that occurred in different jurisdictions and years apart. The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene of a homicide in Prairie View. Cartridge casings and a projectile were recovered at the scene and entered into Fort Bend County's NIBIN system. A year later in Houston, two suspects attempted to murder two men who fled on foot. Cartridge casings were recovered at the scene, and entered into NIBIN at the Houston Police Department. That same day in Houston, officers responding to the scene of a disturbance made several arrests. Investigation revealed a link between one of the suspects and the two earlier incidents; evidence from the homicide was brought to Houston for entry into Houston's NIBIN system. Ten months later, a road rage incident occurred in Harris County, Texas. A pistol recovered during the incident was testfired, and the evidence entered into Harris County's NIBIN unit. Correlation revealed a potential link to the earlier crimes, and this link was confirmed by examination of the original evidence. Each agency then gained valuable information about the suspects involved in the events, and investigations are continuing.

Week of 6/3: Within only seven days after the first crime, the New Orleans Police Department has used NIBIN to resolve a series of three violent crimes. In an aggravated assault against four victims, the victims' car was fired on by two unknown persons in another vehicle. Cartridge casings were recovered at the scene and imaged into NIBIN. Ballistic evidence was also collected at the scene of another crime, a shooting, that took place five days later. Two days after the second crime, a suspect was arrested after an aggravated burglary, and his weapon was seized. When the crime gun was testfired and imaged into NIBIN, police discovered that the assault, the shooting, and the aggravated burglary were committed using the same firearm.

Week of 5/27: NIBIN has assisted the Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Police Department in removing violent offenders from the streets of their city. Officers investigated an armed robbery and shooting in which one victim was robbed at gunpoint while the second victim fled on foot. Suspects fired shots at the fleeing victim; the two cartridge cases recovered at the scene were imaged into the department's IBIS unit. Two months later, at a checkpoint to screen for intoxicated drivers, an approaching driver attempted to elude the checkpoints. When he was apprehended by officers, his handgun was seized. The firearm was testfired, and cartridge casings entered into IBIS; the link was then discovered between this crime gun and the weapon used in the armed robbery.