



Investigative Support Section

# SPECIAL BULLETIN!

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## **OFFICER SAFETY** **Nextel Cell Phone Warning**

Some officers were searching a truck recently where they found 65 pounds of marijuana in the sleeper. As they were continuing their search a Nextel cellular phone started ringing. The phone was in its holster hanging on the dash. The phone stopped ringing. The officers figured it either went to voice mail or the caller hung up after not receiving an answer. Later as they were trying to work out a controlled delivery they learned a very valuable lesson concerning Nextel phones.

The caller, who was in the Bronx, and who was the intended destination for the dope, did not hang up when the phone stopped ringing. The phone was set to auto-answer. He heard everything the officers said while they were searching the inside of the truck. Just goes to show you, you learn something new every day. This could have had disastrous effects concerning officer safety at the time of the delivery. For those of you not familiar with Nextel phones, you can access the auto-answer feature by pressing the "\*" key and then the "#" key. Then arrow over until you come to the auto-answer feature. There you can check to see if the auto-answer feature is turned "on" or "off" and if turned "on," how many rings it is set for before activating. In addition, the phone can be set for silent ring so that you don't even know when it is ringing or not.

We are not sure of the source of the original intelligence about this stop and the Nextel phone but we checked it out with one of our colleagues locally and he confirmed all of these capabilities (which he wasn't aware of until contacted). This is a potentially serious threat to agents especially in a controlled delivery environment. Always check cell phones to make sure what kind they are. Especially be careful of Nextel phones when found and make sure the auto-answer feature is turned off or that at least no one says anything near it that can be heard and tip off a potential suspect.