



For Immediate Release
Contact: Melissa Merz
312-814-3118
877-844-5461 (TTY)
mmerz@atg.state.il.us
May 11, 2006

MADIGAN, I-SORT PARTNERS ANNOUNCE RESULTS OF "OPERATION CHILD PREDATOR WATCH" IN DECATUR

Decatur – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that investigators from her office and partners from the Illinois Sex Offender Registry Team (I-SORT) conducted a child predator compliance check this morning in Decatur to ensure sex offenders are residing in the locations where they are registered and not evading detection by law enforcement officials.

I-SORT members conducted an early morning sweep, dubbed “Operation Child Predator Watch,” in Decatur to verify compliance with state registration laws by the 55 child predators currently registered as living in Decatur.

Madigan was expected to be joined at an afternoon news conference to announce the results of the focused sex offender compliance operation by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) Director Roger E. Walker Jr., Macon County Sheriff Jerry Dawson and Decatur Police Chief James Anderson.

According to Illinois State Police (ISP) statistics, Macon County ranks 14 th out of the 102 counties in the state for the highest number of sex offenders registered within its boundaries.

“Child predators are only required to register with local law enforcement once every year, so it is important to conduct compliance checks to make sure we know where they are as often as possible,” Madigan said. “To supplement local law enforcement resources, I-SORT members travel to different parts of the state to verify that sex offenders are in compliance and update the state’s registry with the latest information regarding their whereabouts.”

“The Illinois Department of Corrections is dedicated to ensuring that sex offenders comply with the strict measures of their parole requirements and sex offender registration laws,” Walker said. “A major focus of the Governor’s historic Operation Spotlight Parole Reform Program is the sound management of monitoring sex offenders. Today, specially trained agents are now supervising the state’s paroled sex offenders. IDOC also implemented a GPS (Global Positioning System) pilot, which uses satellite technology to track high-risk sex offender parolee movement.”

Walker also emphasized that IDOC is proud to be a partner and continues to be dedicated to the success of the Illinois Sex Offender Registry Task Force in its

collaboration with city, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies in addressing public safety.

“Conducting compliance checks for registered sex offenders is a priority for the Macon County Sheriff’s Office, and multi-agency efforts like the sweep conducted today are important to ensure these offenders are following their court ordered obligations. Our ultimate goal is keeping our residents safe from sexual predators,” Dawson said.

“The Decatur Police Department rigorously monitors all registered sex offenders and child predators in our community. The safety of our children must always come first. Joint operations such as this one help to ensure compliance with the law,” Anderson said.

Madigan created I-SORT in December 2003 to combat non-compliance and other problems with the state sex offender registry, and I-SORT has since undertaken comprehensive and ongoing efforts to improve the registration process and solve problems with the system. In the past year, I-SORT members have conducted targeted raids and used tips from the sex offender hotline to locate non-compliant offenders, worked to improve the accuracy of the information on the sex offender Web site and launched a public awareness campaign to publicize the importance of the Web site as a tool to protect families.

As of May 1, ISP statistics show compliance with Illinois’ sex offender registration requirements is at 92.4 percent . The new compliance figures show that out of the 18,018 Illinoisans required to register as sex offenders, only 1,367 have failed to do so. Madigan said that when I-SORT was first created in December 2003, only 86 percent of Illinois’s sex offenders were compliant with the registration requirements. Madigan noted that while I-SORT members are pleased with this increase in compliance, they are continuing their extensive efforts to improve the accuracy and usefulness of the information on the registry.

In a continued effort to make the state’s sex offender registration laws more effective, Madigan last year drafted and helped to pass legislation that amends the Sex Offender Registration Act. Under the new provisions, offenders who are convicted of violating the Sex Offender Registration Act by avoiding annual registration or other requirements now must register with the state every 90 days. Because offenders previously had to register only once a year, the new requirement is intended to tip off law enforcement a full nine months earlier if a sex offender fails to register.

In addition, offenders now are required to register with law enforcement within five days of sentencing for probation or release from prison, cutting their “grace period” in half from the previous 10 days they had to register. Also, sex offenders who lack a fixed residence are required to report to local law enforcement on a weekly basis until they find a residence and properly register. Sex offenders who are convicted multiple times for violations of the Act will be charged on the second or subsequent offenses with a Class 2 felony, punishable by three to seven years in IDOC.

Madigan and I-SORT also have drafted numerous other successful initiatives, including laws requiring sex offenders to have their photos taken each year when they register to ensure the offenders’ photos are up-to-date.

[Return to May 2006 Press Releases](#)