



September 29, 2010

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**MADIGAN: SEX OFFENDER ARRESTED ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGE**

***NCMEC Tip Leads to Arrest of Vermilion County Man on Child Porn and Weapons Charges***

Danville — Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced today that a Vermilion County man was arrested Tuesday, September 28, on a child pornography charge. The arrest of Leroy Piehl, 70, is the sixth since Madigan launched an initiative targeting the most active participants in downloading and disseminating child pornography on the Internet.

Vermilion County State's Attorney Randy Brinegar, Sheriff Patrick Hartshorn, and Tilton Police Chief Steve Cornett joined Madigan at a noon press conference to announce the arrest. The investigation of Piehl, of Tilton, was generated by a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). He was formally charged this morning with one count of child pornography, a Class 3 felony punishable by two to five years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). Piehl also was charged with one count of possession of a weapon by a felon, a Class 3 felony punishable by two to ten years in IDOC. Piehl is scheduled to appear in court this afternoon where bond will be set. He is being held in the Vermilion County Jail.

Piehl is a registered child sex offender and was convicted in Vermilion County in 1991 of aggravated sexual abuse. The victim was under age 16. In 1984, Piehl was convicted in Vermilion County of indecent liberties with a child.

"Child pornography destroys the lives of victims," said Attorney General Madigan. "These children are victimized again and again every time these horrid images are viewed, downloaded and traded on the Internet."

Madigan said the presence of NCMEC in the investigation illustrates the critical role national organizations have in working with her office and local law enforcement to fight the spread of child pornography. Likewise, cooperation among the Attorney General's office, local law enforcement and State's Attorneys' offices has been vital in the ongoing effort to crack down on child pornographers in Illinois.

"More and more criminals are using new technology, including the Internet to commit crimes. This is especially true with child pornography. Law enforcement has had to adapt in prosecuting these crimes. I would not be able to pursue this case without the help of our local police agencies and the Attorney General's Office. I am grateful to Lisa Madigan for her active role in making this possible," said Vermilion County State's Attorney Brinegar.

"Today's arrest highlights the fact that sex offenders often reoffend, and that is why law enforcement is working closely with Attorney General Madigan to implement this initiative. We can use technology to register and track sex offenders in our community," said Vermilion County Sheriff Hartshorn.

"I am pleased to participate in this effort to arrest this child porn trafficker," added Tilton Police Chief Steve Cornett. "Even in small towns like Tilton, law enforcement is working hand in hand with the Attorney General to bring perpetrators involved in child porn to justice."

Last month, Attorney General Madigan announced a new initiative to find and arrest the worst child pornographers in Illinois using the unique identifier that each computer is assigned when it accesses the Internet, known as an Internet protocol (IP) address. In the past 30 days, more than 8,000 Illinois IP addresses were seen trading child pornography images and videos. Madigan plans to continue this work to investigate and arrest child pornographers.

"This is fair warning to Internet predators. When they use this technology to break the law and victimize innocent children, we will use the same technology to stop them," Madigan said.

Studies have shown that users of child pornography are more likely to also be sexual abusers of children. A total of 24,560 sex offenders are listed on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry, of which more than 81 percent committed a crime against a child. The Illinois Sex Offender Registry is located at [www.isp.state.il.us](http://www.isp.state.il.us).

Along with this initiative to arrest child pornographers, Madigan also works with local and national law enforcement organizations to address Internet exploitation of children and women. Madigan's office, with a grant from the Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement. Since 2006, Madigan's office has been involved in more than 300 arrests of sexual predators and provided Internet safety training and education to more than 128,000 parents, teachers and students and more than 10,000 law enforcement professionals.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law. The Vermilion County State's Attorney's office will prosecute the case.

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