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MADIGAN'S CRACKDOWN ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHERS CONTINUES

Two arrested in LaSalle and Peru on Child Pornography Charges

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced today the arrest of two men in central Illinois in her continuing crackdown that is targeting the most active participants in downloading and trading child pornography online.

"These are the eighth and ninth arrests since I announced this initiative to crack down on child pornography barely a month ago. They will not be the last," Madigan said. "We know that across Illinois thousands of people are trafficking in child pornography via the Internet. These criminals are victimizing children in communities from Chicago to Cairo. Working closely with local law enforcement, we will continue to methodically identify, arrest and prosecute those who choose to prey on our children."

On Thursday, the Attorney General's investigators working with local law enforcement arrested Lance Greathouse, of Peru, and Wade Coop, of LaSalle, on child pornography charges. Madigan's office was assisted in the investigation and arrests by the LaSalle and Peru police departments, the LaSalle County Sheriff's office, the LaSalle County State's Attorney's office, and the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Greathouse, 27, of Peru, is charged with two counts of aggravated child pornography, a Class 2 felony punishable by three to seven years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and two counts of child pornography, a Class 3 felony punishable by two to five years in the IDOC. His bond was set at \$35,000 during a hearing Thursday in LaSalle County Circuit Court.

"I would like to commend the efforts of Attorney General Madigan and her entire investigative staff for their work on this initiative," said Peru Police Chief Douglas P. Bernabei. "Their expertise and leading role in this area of law enforcement is no doubt critical to effective law enforcement not only here locally but statewide as well."

Coop, 41, of LaSalle, a convicted child sex offender, is charged with two counts of aggravated child pornography, a Class 2 felony punishable by three to seven years in the IDOC; unlawful use of a weapon by a felon, a Class 3 felony punishable by two to 10 years in the IDOC; one count of manufacturing cannabis and one count of possessing cannabis. Coop's bond was set at \$100,000.

"On behalf of the City of LaSalle and the LaSalle Police Department, I would like to personally commend the work done by the Illinois Attorney General's Office and all of the agencies involved in the investigation and arrest of Wade Coop," said LaSalle Police Chief Robert Uranich. "Crimes against children must be considered some of the most serious and vile crimes committed, and we are extremely pleased that the Illinois Attorney General's Office has committed the resources to do all we can to protect all the children of our communities."

Madigan said cooperation among the Attorney General's office, local law enforcement and State's Attorneys' offices is essential to the ongoing effort to crack down on child pornographers in Illinois.

"Based on the unique circumstances of this case, I had the ability to see first hand the collaborative effort between the staff of the Attorney General's Office, our LaSalle and Peru Police Departments, and the LaSalle County State's Attorney's Office," said LaSalle County State's Attorney Brian Towne. "I am very proud of the productive and successful work that was done by this team of professionals. Child pornography is a despicable crime, and unfortunately it continues to occur at alarming rates throughout our state and the nation. I look forward to continued successes ferreting out these offenders with the resources of Attorney General Madigan's Office."

In late August, 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.

"Internet predators need to know that the technology they use to victimize our children is the same technology that law enforcement around this state will use to identify them, find them and imprison 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.

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 defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.

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