



June 9, 2011

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN ANNOUNCES TWO ARRESTED ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced today that a Madison County man and a McHenry County man became the 21st and 22nd arrests in her crackdown on the most active traffickers who download and trade child pornography over the Internet.

"Possession and distribution of child pornography are not victimless crimes. Every time an offender views, downloads or trades images online, innocent children are victimized over and over again," Attorney General Madigan said. "Child pornography destroys the lives of these young victims. My office will continue to work with our local partners to find these offenders and arrest them."

McCullom Lake Arrest

In an operation today, McCullom Lake Police assisted Attorney General Madigan's investigators in the arrest of Erich Wilfinger, 29, after a search warrant was executed at his residence. Two computers were seized which contained evidence of alleged child pornography. Wilfinger was transported to the McHenry County Correctional Center and charged with one count each of Aggravated Child Pornography, a Class 2 felony, punishable by three- to seven-years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and Possession of Child Pornography, a Class 3 felony punishable by two- to five-years in prison. Wilfinger is scheduled to appear in bond court Friday morning. The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office will prosecute the case.

"I want the community to know that there is no immediate risk to our children," said McCullom Lake Police Chief Zachary Beatty. "At this time, the evidence points to the defendant dealing pornography over the Internet."

East Alton Arrest

On Wednesday, Attorney General investigators also arrested Brandon Charles Seymour, 29, of East Alton, who was charged today with 10 counts of Aggravated Distribution of Child Pornography, a Class X felony punishable by a six- to 30-year prison term in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and 10 additional counts of Aggravated Possession of Child Pornography, a Class 2 felony punishable by three- to seven-years in IDOC. Three computers, a DVD and other evidence were seized during the execution of a search warrant at Seymour's residence. The initial investigation revealed more than 1,000 video files containing alleged child pornography were on the equipment seized.

Seymour is in custody at the Madison County Jail with bond set at \$100,000. Madigan said cooperation among state and local law enforcement is key to the success of this arrest and her efforts in reining in child pornographers throughout Illinois. The Madison County Sheriff's Department and the Madison County State's Attorney's Office assisted Madigan's office.

"Child pornographers are continuing to find that their vile acts are not going to be tolerated in Madison County, and that our team of local, county, state and federal law enforcement and prosecutors will not rest until we put an end to these despicable acts," State's Attorney Thomas Gibbons said. "I commend the excellent work of the Madison County Sheriff's Department and Attorney General Madigan's office for their tireless work to help keep the families and children of our communities safe. I am proud to be a part of this important effort and I will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with our law enforcement team members in the ongoing fight to protect the citizens of Madison County by getting child predators off the streets and out of our communities."

Operation Glass House

In August 2010, Attorney General Madigan announced the initiative, dubbed Operation Glass House, 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. Nearly 4,700 Illinois IP addresses were seen trading child pornography images and videos across the state by the Attorney General's office investigators.

Studies have shown that users of child pornography are more likely to be sexual abusers of children. There are 21,320 sex offenders listed on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry, of which 85 percent committed a crime against a child. The Illinois Sex Offender Registry is located at www.isp.state.il.us.

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, administers the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement. Since 2006, Madigan's ICAC office has been involved in 367 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 both defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.

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