

Downloading Child Pornography Leads to 60 Months Prison Time for Macoupin County Man

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EAST ST. LOUIS - A Staunton, IL., man - 43-year-old Christopher R. Buse - has been sentenced to 60 months in prison for knowingly receiving child pornography over the internet, U.S. Attorney Steven D. Weinhoeft announced today.

United States District Judge Nancy J. Rosenstengel handed down the five-year sentence, which is to be followed by five more years of supervised release. A hearing to determine restitution is scheduled to be held within the next 30 days.

In 2016, agents with the Cyber Crimes Task Force utilized peer-to-peer software to download nine video files depicting child pornography from IP addresses associated with Buse at his former residence in O'Fallon, Illinois.

One of those videos, which depicted a prepubescent female engaged in sexually explicit conduct, was downloaded on July 11, 2016, and formed the basis for Buse's indictment. A search warrant was executed on Buse's Staunton address in May 2017, which led to the seizure of multiple computers and external computer storage devices.

A forensic analysis of Buse's devices revealed the presence of over 100 child pornography videos. During an interview with law enforcement agents, Buse admitted that he had been searching for and downloading child pornography videos and images for over two years.

He pleaded guilty to a single count indictment in October 2018. This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims.

For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc. For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc and click on the tab "resources." The case was investigated by the Southern Illinois Cyber Crimes Task Force, the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department, and the O'Fallon, Illinois Police Department and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher Hoell.