

Man Enters Guilty Plea to Sexually Assaulting Three Juvenile Females Under 13

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — The Madison County State's Attorney's Office today announced a 45-year-old man pleaded guilty today to sexually assaulting three minors in Bethalto which began in 2011.

Eric B. Rusk (d.o.b. 7/24/74) was charged on May 12, 2017, with multiple counts of Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of A Child, Class X felonies. The defendant pleaded guilty to three counts of Criminal Sexual Assault, one for each of the victims.

Throughout the course of the investigation, it was determined that the defendant had abused three juvenile females at his Bethalto home. All of the victims were under the ages of 13 when the acts of sexual penetration were committed. Due to the age of the victims and the State's Attorney's desire to maintain their privacy, additional information regarding the victims will not be released.

The plea agreement was reached after consultation with the victims and their families. In cases of sexual assault, it is required that children testify at trial which can often be difficult for young victims. This plea sends the defendant to prison for a substantial period of time. Additionally, it requires Rusk to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life.

State's Attorney Tom Gibbons acknowledged the vital work of Assistant State's Attorneys Kathleen Nolan and Alison Foley of the office's Children's Justice Division, whose collaboration with the Bethalto Police Department and Madison County Child Advocacy Center secured the plea and conviction of Rusk.

Gibbons stated, "These types of cases involve many dedicated people who are persistent in their work in order to ensure that people who exploit and victimize children in such a horrific way get the lengthy prison sentences they deserve. I anticipate that with today's plea, the victims of the case can find closure knowing they will not have to withstand trial and relive such traumatic experiences."

Rusk's guilty plea was accepted by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli. The defendant will be sentenced to 21 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections and will be required to serve 85 percent of the sentence imposed.