

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL LISA MADIGAN

PRESS



RELEASE

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

For Immediate Release
March 7, 2014

Media Contact: Scott Mulford
217-524-4173
smulford@atg.state.il.us
@ILAttyGeneral

**MADIGAN: REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER ARRESTED DURING CHILD
PORNOGRAPHY CRACKDOWN IN METRO EAST**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced the arrests of two men on felony child pornography charges following raids this week in St. Clair and Madison counties. One of the men arrested is listed in the Illinois Sex Offender Registry.

To date, 57 people have been arrested in “Operation Glass House,” Madigan’s statewide initiative to apprehend the most active offenders who download and trade child pornography online.

“Child pornography is a horrific crime that victimizes children each time an image is viewed or traded,” Madigan said. “My office has been—and will continue to be—relentless in tracking down and apprehending offenders who download these heinous videos.”

Ryan Scott Richards, 40, of Lebanon, was charged with two counts of Class X dissemination of child pornography punishable by an enhanced sentence of nine to 30 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) due to a prior conviction and the ages of the children involved. Additionally, Richards was charged with two counts of possession of child pornography, a Class 1 felony punishable by four to 15 years in IDOC. Richards, who is listed on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry as a sexual predator, is being held in the St. Clair County Jail with bond set at \$500,000.

Madigan’s investigators, with the assistance of the Lebanon Police Department and the St. Clair County State’s Attorney’s office, executed a search warrant early Wednesday at his residence in the 400 block of Summerfield Street, where evidence of alleged child pornography was located.

“The Lebanon Police Department was pleased to work with the Attorney General’s Office,” said Chief Scott Abbott. “In a time when most law enforcement agencies are struggling with limited resources, it only makes sense to work together. The professionalism and cooperation displayed by both departments was impressive, and we look forward to enhancing our relationship.”

The St. Clair County State’s Attorney’s office will prosecute the case.

“These alleged acts are disturbing and are threats to our children’s well-being,” State’s Attorney Brendan Kelly said. “The continued close coordination between the Attorney General and my office shows we’ll do whatever it takes to protect the kids of Illinois.”

Joshua R. Phipps, 26, of Glen Carbon, was charged with four counts of Class X child pornography, punishable by six to 30 years in IDOC, and one count of Class 1 child pornography, which carries a possible sentence of four to 15 years in prison. Phipps is being held in the Madison County Jail with bond set at \$250,000 by Judge Kyle Napp. Glen Carbon Police assisted Madigan’s investigators in a search Thursday at Phipps’ residence in the 100 block of School Street, where evidence of alleged child pornography was found.

Glen Carbon Police Chief John Lakin praised the efforts of the investigators from the Attorney General’s office for identifying this individual.

“Those that prey upon our children should be charged to the fullest extent of the law,” Lakin said.

The Madison County State’s Attorney’s office will prosecute the case.

“The production and sharing of child pornography is a hidden danger to our children and our entire community,” said State’s Attorney Thomas Gibbons. “Images and videos of abused children represent some of the worst and most unimaginably awful behavior that predators are inflicting on the innocent among us. Fortunately, Attorney General Madigan has made it a top priority to seek out and expose individuals who produce and trade in child pornography – thereby removing the threat and helping us keep our community safe for our families and children. I want to personally thank Attorney General Madigan and everyone involved in this important operation, and let them know that we support their efforts to help keep Madison County and the state safe from predators.”

The public is reminded that the defendants in both of the cases are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Madigan’s office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children ([ICAC](#)) Task Force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. Since 2006, Madigan’s ICAC Task Force has been involved in 709 arrests of sexual predators. The Task Force has also provided Internet safety training and education to more than 333,000 parents, teachers and students and more than 17,000 law enforcement professionals. Currently 189 agencies are affiliated with the Illinois ICAC.