

Lake County Sheriff's Office

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Date: July 7, 2020



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John D. Idleburg
Sheriff

MEDIA RELEASE

Sheriff's Cybercrimes Unit Works with Kenosha PD to Apprehend Man Who Shared Child Pornography

In September of 2019 a victim, who resides in unincorporated Gurnee, came to the Lake County Sheriff's Office to report she was being harassed and stalked online. The victim stated nude photos of her were sent to her family members and friends.

The Lake County Sheriff's Cybercrimes Unit conducted an investigation which revealed in 2016, when the victim was a minor, she met someone online. The person she met online claimed to be a 16-year-old boy. The two communicated for several months online and the victim felt she was in a quasi-relationship with the '16-year-old boy.' During their communication the victim was enticed to send nude photos and videos of herself, to the '16-year-old.' After several months of communicating back-and-forth, the victim stopped communicating with the other person.

In 2019, the victim received an unsolicited message from the person she had previously been communicating with. The person threatened her, telling her if she didn't send additional nude photos and videos, he would send the nude photos he already possessed of her to her family and friends. The victim refused to comply, and the person then began disseminating nude images of the victim to her family and friends.

The investigation by the Lake County Sheriff's Cybercrimes Unit revealed the person the victim was communicating with was Howard M. Hickey, 56, of the 8500 block of 64th Street, Kenosha, Wisconsin. Lake County Sheriff's Detectives worked with Kenosha Police Department Detectives and obtained a search warrant for Hickey's home on July 1, 2020. Lake County Sheriff's Detectives assisted Kenosha Police on the execution of the search warrant on July 2, 2020. During the search warrant Hickey attempted to destroy an electronic device.

Following the search warrant, Hickey was charged in Kenosha County, Wisconsin with:

Three counts of possession of child pornography

Three counts of distribution of child pornography

Felony stalking

Obstructing an officer

Hickey was initially held at the Kenosha County Jail and was released on bail after posting \$20,000.00.

Sheriff John Idleburg said, "I am proud of the collaboration between our detectives and the Kenosha Police Department to identify and arrest this sexual predator. I cannot stress it enough, sexual predators lurk online and often pretend to be people they are not. Parents, please always check who your children communicate with online and monitor the applications they use."

All defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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