

Convicted Albuquerque sex offender pleads guilty to pornography charge

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ALBUQUERQUE – Randal Gordon Paul, 47, of Albuquerque, N.M., entered a guilty plea March 7 to a federal child pornography charge. Under the terms of his plea agreement, Paul will be sentenced to ten years of imprisonment followed by a lifetime of supervised release. Paul also will be required to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,000 to any victim who is identified and requests restitution, and to register as a sex offender.

Paul was arrested on Dec. 2, on a criminal complaint charging him with possessing and distributing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit activity from June 2015 through Nov. 2016, in Bernalillo County, N.M.

According to the criminal complaint, the investigation into Paul began in Nov. 2014, after an email address belonging to Paul, was used to register an account with a website known to show images of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Further investigation revealed that Paul was a registered sex offender with two prior convictions; the first in 1996 for lewd and lascivious acts with a child under 14, and the second in 1998 for aggravated sexual abuse.

On Nov. 16, law enforcement searched Paul's residence and found a computer containing a video and at least 30 images of child pornography.

During the change of plea hearing, Paul pled guilty to a felony information charging him with possessing child pornography between Dec. 2012 and Nov. 2016, in Bernalillo County. In his plea agreement, Paul admitted downloading child pornography from the internet and saving them on electronic devices, including a desktop computer.

Paul has been in federal custody since his arrest. He remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

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This case was investigated by the Albuquerque office of the FBI and the New Mexico Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory. Assistant U.S. Attorney Holland S. Kastrin is prosecuting the case 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 United States Attorneys' Offices and DOJ's Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims.