

The

# Pasadena

## Citizen



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## **Registered offender convicted of distribution, possession of child pornography**

U.S. District Judge Gray Miller has convicted Burt Hughes, 58, a Houston resident, of one count each of distributing and possessing child pornography following a stipulated facts bench trial this morning, U.S. Attorney José Angel Moreno announced Thursday.

Indicted in August of last year, Hughes requested a trial before Judge Miller without a jury. During the trial held this morning, the United States provided the court with evidence which proved Hughes was distributing child pornography images through peer-to-peer software using his home computer. Initially, the La Porte Police Department downloaded several images of child pornography from Hughes. The images were passed on to the FBI Innocent Images Task Force. Based on the information obtained from the downloads, a search warrant was issued. The warrant was executed at Hughes' residence where several computers were seized. Forensic analysis of the computer revealed more than 560 videos containing child pornography.

Hughes faces a minimum of 15 years and a maximum of 40 years in federal prison on the distribution of child pornography conviction, while the possession of child pornography conviction carries a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment. Both counts of conviction also carry a maximum fine of \$250,000 as possible punishment. Upon completion of any prison term imposed, Hughes also faces a maximum life term of supervised release during which the court can impose a number of special conditions designed to protect children and prohibit the use of the Internet. Individuals convicted of these crimes are required to register as a sex offender, a requirement already imposed on Hughes based on a previous conviction. Sentencing is scheduled for July 22, 2011.

Hughes was sentenced to prison and ordered to register as a sex offender following a conviction in a Texas state court for fondling a child in violation of Texas Penal Code 21.11(A)(1). He was released from state prison in 1994. In federal custody since his August 2010 arrest, Hughes will remain in custody pending his July 2011 sentencing hearing.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the 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. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sherri L. Zack.