



U.S. Department of Justice

Kenneth J. Gonzales

United States Attorney

District of New Mexico

201 3rd Street NW

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

Norman Cairns, Assistant U.S. Attorney, PAO , 505-224-1521

CONTACTS: *Elizabeth M. Martinez, Assistant U.S. Attorney, 505-224-1469*
Charlyn Rees, Assistant U. S. Attorney/Project Safe Childhood Coordinator
505-224-1426

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 14, 2010

**PRIOR SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED IN FEDERAL
COURT ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY OFFENSE**

Earlier today, United States District Judge Judith C. Herrera sentenced **Norman Cleve Elquest**, a 49-year old Albuquerque resident, to a 15-year term of imprisonment to be followed by a life-time of supervised release for distributing and attempting to distribute child pornography pursuant to a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office. Elquest also is required to register as a sex offender. Elquest was charged with federal child pornography offenses in a six-count indictment in December 2009, and entered a guilty plea to distribution and attempted distribution of child pornography in March 2010. Elquest has been in custody since his arrest in January 2010.

Court filings reveal that Elquest has prior felony convictions for Attempt to Commit Criminal Sexual Penetration in the third degree and Criminal Sexual Contact of a Minor in the third degree in Bernalillo County, New Mexico. According to Elquest's plea agreement, the investigation leading to the indictment of Elquest began in July 2009 when

a law enforcement agent, who was acting in an undercover capacity, downloaded a child pornography video from a computer belonging to Elquest. In August 2009, agents of the New Mexico Attorney General's Office executed a search warrant at Elquest's residence and seized computers, floppy disks and compact disks. Forensic examination later revealed that that Elquest possessed more than 1400 images of child pornography and 186 child pornography videos as well as file-sharing programs. Elquest has admitted to using the file-sharing programs to distribute and to attempt to distribute child pornography.

Following Elquest's sentencing, U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said:

"Those who think that they are safe behind the perceived anonymity of the Internet should be put on notice that there is no safe haven for child sex predators. This prosecution again demonstrates that my Office will vigorously pursue those who sexually exploit our children via the Internet so that these offenders can be held accountable for their serious crimes."

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Charlyn Rees and 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 U.S. 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.