



U. S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois

Patrick J. Fitzgerald
United States Attorney

Federal Building
219 South Dearborn Street, Fifth Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-5300

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www.justice.gov/usao/iln

PRESS CONTACTS:
AUSA Tiffany Tracy (312)353-1412
Randall Samborn (312)353-5318

FORMER STICKNEY FIRE LIEUTENANT SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR POSSESSING AND DISTRIBUTING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

CHICAGO — A former Stickney village fire lieutenant was sentenced today to 10 years and 1 month in federal prison and ordered to pay \$1,500 restitution to an identified victim of child sexual exploitation for possessing and distributing child pornography, federal law enforcement officials announced. The defendant, **Michael Gruber**, 56, currently of Berwyn and formerly of North Riverside, was ordered to remain in home detention with electronic monitoring until he begins serving a 121-month prison sentence on Sept. 1.

U.S. District Judge James Zagel imposed the sentence in Federal Court in Chicago, and placed Gruber on five years of supervised release following his incarceration. The judge also ordered restrictions on Gruber's use of cameras, computers and the Internet, and contact with minors following his release from custody. Under federal law, Gruber must serve at least 85 percent of his sentence before he is eligible for release. The sentence as announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to court documents, Gruber pleaded guilty in January 2010, admitting that he traded child pornography online between at least 2005 and 2008. In early 2008, he sent child pornography to an undercover FBI agent through an online chat room. He was arrested after agents

searched his residence in September 2008 and recovered a computer hard drive and 51 discs containing a total of 13,799 still images and 396 videos — all sorted and categorized, and totaling 43,499 images of child pornography. There were no allegations that Gruber produced any child pornography or sexually abused any minors.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI's Innocent Images Task Force. The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tiffany Tracy.

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