

Scottsburg man is charged with distribution of child pornography

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Indiana State Police, inspectors with the U.S. Postal System and agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation spent several hours at a Scottsburg home last Thursday, April 2, collecting evidence against a man suspected of producing child pornography.

The residence, located on Owen Street, was the scene of activity as troopers, agents and inspectors went through the belongings of Mark William Armstrong, 40, who is now being held in the New Albany Jail.

According to a jail officer, Armstrong has been charged in U.S. District Court, Southern District of Indiana, in New Albany with distribution of child pornography, a Class C felony under Indiana law. Federal charges may be pending.

Initial information from Timothy M. Morrison, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District, was that Armstrong was to be charged with sexual exploitation of children for producing child pornography. No explanation was available on the difference between the initial and final charge.

Officers with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement with assistance from the Fishers, In., Police Department, Indiana State Police, the Hamilton County Metro Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and the FBI conducted the investigation which led to Armstrong being taken into custody on Thursday.

The complaint alleges that Armstrong engaged in sexually explicit conduct with two minor relatives "...for the purpose of producing visual depictions of such conduct" in August, 2008. Armstrong is also accused of having produced the video using materials that had been in interstate commerce.

If Armstrong is convicted, he faces a minimum mandatory sentence of 15 years imprisonment and a possible maximum of 30 years. He also faces a possible maximum fine of \$250,000.

Armstrong had his initial court hearing in U.S. District Court on Friday, April 3, before Magistrate Judge Michael Naville. No bail was set for him, and he remains incarcerated at the New Albany facility.

The case was developed as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat growing child sexual exploitation and abuse. The initiative was launched in May, 2006, by the U.S. Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, officials of Project Safe Childhood use federal, state and local resources to locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet as well as identify and rescue victims.

More information about Project Safe Childhood can be obtained by visiting www.projectsafechildhood.gov.