

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## ***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA***

***San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney  
Laura E. Duffy***

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***For Immediate Release***

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - March 26, 2012**

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced the sentencing today of Leonard Joseph Chapel, a tool shop repairman, in federal court in San Diego based upon his conviction for possession of child pornography with a prior sex offense, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a)(4). United States District Judge Marilyn L. Huff sentenced Chapel to serve 121 months in prison, followed by ten years of supervised release. Judge Huff also ordered the defendant to register as a sex offender.

On December 15, 2011, Chapel pled guilty to possession of child pornography with a prior sex offense. He has been in custody since his arrest on November 4, 2011. His prior sex offenses are California PC §261(5), unlawful sex with a minor under age 16 in 1978 and California PC §311.11, possession of child pornography from 2005.

According to court documents, Chapel was sharing child pornography files on a commercially available peer-to-peer file sharing program. A search warrant was executed for Chapel's home on November 4, 2011 and pursuant to the search, a computer was found that contained over 600 images of child pornography.

This case stems from an investigation by the ICE's Homeland Security Investigations.

This case is being brought as part of the Department of Justice Project Safe Childhood, and ICE's Operation Predator, both are nationwide initiatives designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov), and for additional information on Operation Predator, please visit [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov).

**DEFENDANT**

**Case Number: 11cr5504-H**

Leonard Joseph Chapel

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252(a) (Possession of Images of Minors Engaged in Sexually Explicit Conduct)

**INVESTIGATING AGENCY**

Immigrations and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations