

Former fire official faces child porn charges

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A longtime local fire official was arrested this morning on possession of child pornography charges.

Authorities have charged Joseph Hubbard, 53, of Gurnee with five counts of possession of child pornography, said Assistant State's Attorney Mary Stanton.

He appeared in bond court this morning and has been released on \$50,000 recognizance bond.

Hubbard was employed as the deputy chief with the Newport Township Fire Protection District, until earlier this month, when he resigned during a police investigation into child porn found on his home computer, in the 4100 block of Russell Avenue. Previous to working at Newport, he was a fire captain with the Gurnee Fire Department until March 2006.

In a statement, Newport Chief Mark Kirschhoffer said his department is cooperating with police in the investigation.

"The district is very troubled by allegations and working to determine if any of the allegations occurred while Mr. Hubbard was working for the District," Kirschhoffer said.

According to Stanton, police began their investigation after a family member reported finding pornographic images on Hubbard's AOL account on his computer at home. Authorities searched the computer and discovered that Hubbard had been e-mailed various pornographic images, which he saved on his computer. Many of the images dated back to earlier this year, but one was nearly five years old, Stanton said. The kids in the pictures were between eight- and 12-years-old.

Police cloned Hubbard's hard drive on his work computer, and are checking it for pornographic images, Stanton said.

Child pornography is a Class 3 felony, which carries a penalty up to five years in prison.