



OFFICIAL MEDIA RELEASE  
KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT



Date: January 9, 2017  
Complaint Number: 16-52834  
Type of Incident: Child Sexually Abusive Activity  
Detective: Jason Richards  
Supervisor Approval: Lt. Ron Gates

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\*\*\*\*\* UPDATE \*\*\*\*\*

On December 14, 2016, the Kent County Sheriff's Office was contacted by the parents of a 16 year old female.

While the 16 year old female was a participant in the Explorer Program at the Cascade Fire Department, she met a 32 year old male paid on-call firefighter. They started a sexual relationship that eventually led them to exchanging nude photographs of each other. Since the female is 16, which is the age of consent in the State of Michigan, there were no criminal sexual conduct charges. However, it is illegal to share nude images of a person under the age of 18.

On February 24, 2017, the Muskegon County Prosecutor's Office (appointed Special Prosecutor) issued charges on the firefighter, Steven Drake, for two counts of sexually abusive material/activity, and two counts of using a computer to commit a crime.

On February 24, 2017, Drake turned himself in to the Kent County Correctional Facility. He was arraigned in the 63<sup>rd</sup> District Court on February 27, 2017.

No additional charges related to this investigation are expected.

\*\*\*\*\* ORIGINAL RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

On December 14, 2016, the Kent County Sheriff's Office was contacted by the parents of a 16 year old female.

While the 16 year old female was a participant in the Explorer Program at the Cascade Fire Department, she met a 51 year old male paid on-call firefighter. They started a sexual relationship that eventually led them to exchanging nude photographs of each other. Since the female is 16, which is the age of consent in the State of Michigan, there were no criminal sexual conduct charges. However, it is illegal to share nude images of a person under the age of 18.

On January 6, 2017, the Kent County Prosecutor's Office issued charges on the firefighter, Clem Bell, for two counts of sexually abusive material/activity, and two counts of using a computer to commit a crime.

On January 7, 2017, the Benzie County Sheriff's Department arrested Bell on the warrant issued by the Kent County Prosecutor's Office.

Bell is currently lodged at the Benzie County Correctional Facility and will be transported to the Kent County Correctional Facility within the next several days. Once at the Kent County Correctional Facility, Bell will appear for arraignment at the 63<sup>rd</sup> District Court.

Cascade Township had no prior knowledge of the illegal activities and has cooperated fully with the investigation.

The investigation into additional charges is ongoing.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Kent County Sheriff's Department at 616-632-6125 or Silent Observer at 616-774-2345.