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# Ex-Sheriff's Sgt. Accused of Sharing Child Porn

Officer serving warrant found images of children and an infant

By [Lauren Steussy](#) and [Artie Ojeda](#) | Thursday, Mar 22, 2012 | Updated 2:29 PM PST

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A Spring Valley man and former sergeant with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department

was arrested Friday for possessing and distributing pornographic images of children as young as 5-years-old.

John Frederick Garner had hundreds of images of prepubescent children posing nude or performing sexual acts, according to a federal complaint.

Garner worked at the Sheriff's Department from 1994 through 2010. His last position was in the George F. Bailey Detention Facility in Otay Mesa, which he retired from in 2010, according to department spokeswoman Jan Caldwell.

A Chula Vista police officer working with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received a tip from Microsoft Corporation that one of their users had uploaded the disturbing images.

The officer served a warrant and seized Garner's computer from his home on Berkwood Drive, which confirmed that the images were downloaded February 16 through 19 of last year.

Court documents show the officer discovered the images were not only uploaded but also distributed to other users. The complaint described the images of boys and girls most of them ages five through 10. One image depicts an infant, the complaint read.

A statement from Garner's attorney said the charges are "extremely difficult for him and his family."

"[Garner] admirably served in the military for 28 years and also served the local law-enforcement community for several years as a deputy sheriff," said his attorney Kerry Armstrong.

In an interview during the raid, Garner confirmed that he received and distributed child pornography on the computer he shared with his wife, prosecutors alleged.

He also allegedly admitted that he participated in sexual online chats about children.

A separate investigator in Los Angeles was also looking into an email account that belonged to Garner. The account was identified on the computer the officer seized from Garner's home. The account contained 50 child pornography images and 12 child pornography videos, as well as several in the "sent" folder, all distributed between February and June 15 2011, the complaint alleges.

Neighbors were surprised to learn that a federal raid served 6 months ago resulted in Garner's charges.

Garner is currently in federal custody, and will appear for a bond hearing Friday at 2:30 p.m., Armstrong said.

"I hope to get him released on bond tomorrow so that we can more effectively fight his charges," Armstrong added.

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