



Press Release

Contact: Cathy Rochel
Phone: 651-430-6151

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE January 12, 2012

County Attorney Pete Orput announced today that Mark James Nelson, age 32 of South St. Paul, entered a guilty in Washington County District Court to First Degree Assault on a six (6) month old infant from Forest Lake, the offense having occurred on August 19, 2011. The charge calls for a Minnesota Sentencing Guideline Sentence of between 74 and 103 months in prison. The plea of guilty was in front of Judge John Hoffman and sentencing was set for March 23, 2012, at 9:00 a.m.

According to the criminal complaint filed in the case, Nelson, who was dating the mother of the infant, became angry with the mother. Nelson then picked up the infant and squeezed its torso until he heard some cracking noises. Medical personnel from Hennepin County Medical Center are cited as stating that 22 of the child's 24 ribs were broken, counting 37 separate fractures. In addition, they found bruising to the liver and lungs, together with trauma to the eyes, all consistent with child abuse, according to the complaint.

County Attorney Orput stated, "The injuries this poor child suffered were absolutely horrendous, so horrendous that, when the guilty plea was entered, one of the onlookers in the courtroom, there on another case, when hearing the facts began to cry. We are pleased to be able to bring some justice to this child and the family."

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