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News Release

HPD Investigating Craigslist Advertisement

March 20, 2013

On October 3, 2012, the Harrisonburg Police Department received a cyber-tip in reference to a posting on Craigslist in which a child was possibly being advertised for sale. The posting had limited information as to the identity of the person that had posted this add. HPD Investigators began working on this information and were able to determine that the posting appeared to have generated from an unknown or unidentifiable location in New Jersey. Investigators also began communicating with federal agencies to coordinate efforts in this investigation.

This type of investigation often relies on information which is ascertained from various social media companies. As a result, on October 27, 2012, Investigators with the Harrisonburg Police Department executed a search warrant on the business of Google Inc., in an attempt to gather information on the person utilizing the email address that was used for the posting.

On March 18, 2013, Investigators with the Harrisonburg Police Department received information back from Google Inc. as related to the previously executed search warrant. Investigators will now be following up on this information and executing more search warrants for additional digital media and social media information.

Based on the initial information of this investigation, HPD cannot rule out the possibility of this advertisement being a scam. Research through Craigslist shows the email address linked to this advertisement was also linked to several other items for sale which appeared to be online scams. HPD will continue to

investigate this case, in conjunction with the State of New Jersey and federal agencies to determine the validity of this information.

Anyone in the community who has information about this case asked to contact the Harrisonburg Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division at 540-437-2640.

Callers are able to remain anonymous by calling Crime Solvers at 540-574-5050. Tipsters may also text "HPD" plus their tip to CRIMES (274637).