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Sheriff's investigation into child molestation case expands; additional victims identified

Port Orchard, Wash. – A South Kitsap business owner is the focus of an expanding investigation into allegations of child molestation.

Leonard Kent Hibbard, age 61, of Manchester, was arrested by Kitsap County Sheriff's detectives in March following an initial investigation into a complaint of child rape. He was subsequently charged in Kitsap County Superior Court with one count of child molestation, 1st degree.

Following his arrest and initial court appearance, Hibbard was released from custody after posting a \$25,000 bail bond. He is the owner of Hibbard Construction.

The investigation remains open.

“As this investigation continues, we have reason to believe that there may be other young victims not yet known to us,” said Sheriff's Detective Doug Dillard. “So far, we have identified five additional victims, all young girls between the ages of eight and eleven. A sixth victim, now an adult, has come forward concerning allegations of molestation by Hibbard that occurred some eight years ago.”

The commonality of the investigation centers on the Port Orchard Church of the Nazarene, located at 4647 Sidney Road, SW. Hibbard was associated with the church and was involved with the church's youth programs. The victim's families were members of the church at the time when the alleged offenses occurred.

Church officials are cooperating fully with the Sheriff's Office.

As the investigation proceeds investigators believe that there may be additional victims, not yet been identified, who may have been afraid to report the offenses.

Anyone with information concerning child sexual assault/molestation situations, are asked to contact Detective Doug Dillard at (360) 337-5617 or (360) 337-7107.

All information will remain confidential.

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