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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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D.A. BROWN: RIDGEWOOD MAN CHARGED
WITH SEXUALLY ABUSING TWO PRETEEN GIRLS

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Ridgewood resident is being held on charges of sexually abusing two neighborhood girls – ages 11 and 12 – last week.

District Attorney Richard A. Brown said, “According to the charges, the defendant accosted two young girls – one while walking home from summer school and the other while shopping in a neighborhood grocery store – within blocks of his own residence. In both instances, it is charged that he sexually abused them and, in the process, attempted to destroy their innocence. Through the vigilant efforts of the NYPD’s Queens Child Abuse Squad, my Office’s Special Victims Bureau and community residents we have been able to locate, identify and remove a dangerous alleged sexual predator from our streets and protect our children from harm.”

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Keith Paladin, 40, of 59-13 Grove Street in Ridgewood, Queens. The defendant is presently being held pending arraignment in Queens Criminal Court on two counts of first-degree sexual abuse, two counts of forcible touching and two counts of endangering the welfare of a child. He faces up to seven years in prison on each case if convicted.

The District Attorney said that, according to the criminal charges, the defendant approached his first victim – an 11-year-old-girl walking home from school at 2:00 p.m. on July 31, 2006 – at the intersection of 60th Place and Menahan Street and pushed her up against a building wall and said, “If you scream, I’ll hurt you.” The defendant then allegedly tongue-kissed his victim before fleeing on foot. It is additionally charged that the defendant grabbed his second victim – a 12-year-old-girl – four days later – August 4, 2006 at 5:55 p.m. – as she was shopping in the Woodward Deli, located at 5-64 Woodward Avenue, and sexually abused and fondled her inside the store.

According to District Attorney Brown, the defendant was recorded by a security surveillance camera at the deli allegedly accosting the second victim. The deli owner turned over the videotape to police who later released it to the media and through further investigation was able to identify the defendant.

The defendant was arrested last night at the Queens Child Advocacy Center in Forest Hills by detectives of the New York City Police Department’s Special Victim’s Squad Child Abuse Unit. The investigation is continuing to determine if there are other victims.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Cecilia Papaleo and Carlos Almonte of the New York City Police Department’s Queens Child Abuse Squad under the supervision of Sergeants Guisella Rodriguez and Robert Flood and the overall supervision of Inspector Ann Marie Connell.

Assistant District Attorneys Donna Marie Golia, Child Advocacy Center Coordinator, and Naomi Schneidmill, both of the District Attorney’s Special Victims Bureau, are prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Kenneth M. Appelbaum, Deputy Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely accusations and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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