

Department of Justice: First conviction issued after testing of backlogged sexual assault kits

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WAUPACA, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced that a jury in Waupaca County convicted Leroy R. Whittenberger of three counts of Second Degree Sexual Assault, class C Felonies, for the assault of a teenage victim that occurred in July 2012. The victim’s sexual assault kit was tested as part of the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) in 2017. This is the first conviction to result from the testing of backlogged sexual assault kits in Wisconsin. The case was presided over by Waupaca County Judge Troy L. Nielsen.

“A survivor who waited years for justice has finally received it,” said Attorney General Kaul. “Yesterday’s verdict is a result of her courage and the work of the public servants who have been dedicated to getting justice in this case.”

This conviction was the result of joint effort by civilian witnesses, New London Police Department, Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory DNA Analyst Kara Raymond, and the Wisconsin Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI). The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorneys General Amber Hahn and Noel Lawrence, with assistance from legal associate Tiffany Briggs, paralegals Jackie Righter and Rachael Sweet, in partnership with the Waupaca County District Attorney’s Office.

Leroy Whittenberger is a serial sexual offender and has three prior sexual assault convictions from Lincoln and Marathon counties. Law enforcement and local advocacy service providers from those counties were instrumental in bringing about these new convictions.

A sentencing hearing has not yet been scheduled. Each count carries a potential

maximum period of imprisonment of 25 years initial confinement and 15 years extended supervision.