

# The Seattle Times

## **New statewide online database tracks sex offenders**

A new online database not only lets you see which sex predators are in your midst but also can alert you by e-mail if an offender moves close by.

By Jennifer Sullivan  
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OLYMPIA — Wondering if a convicted sex offender is living in your neighborhood?

A new statewide online database not only lets you see which sex predators are in your midst, but also can alert you by e-mail if an offender moves close by.

The Web site is the state's first centralized sex-offender database for law enforcement and the public, said Colleen Wilson, president of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). The list is located on the association's Web site.

Until now, WASPC, every sheriff's office and many police departments across the state kept their own databases containing varying information about sex offenders required to register under state law.

"Some counties had really good ones, some not so good and others didn't have them at all," said WASPC Executive Director Don Pierce.

Under the new system, sex-offender registry information will still be taken by local law enforcement but will be automatically fed into the WASPC database, said Wilson, who is also chief of the Port of Seattle Police Department.

The information includes the offender's name, photo and general address, such as street name and block number.

The database also allows users to sign up for e-mail alerts issued when a sex offender moves into their neighborhood.

In addition to the new database, police are being asked to check in on Level I sex offenders, those least likely to re-offend, to make sure the address they gave to law enforcement is accurate. In the past, police would often just send letters to those offenders to verify their locations, Wilson said.

Police still check the addresses of Level II and Level III offenders in person.

Gov. Chris Gregoire announced the WASPC database on Monday.

She said the database, as well as a handful of other changes to the way that state law-enforcement officials monitor sex offenders, was prompted by the July 2007 kidnapping and slaying of 12-year-old Zina Linnik of Tacoma. Convicted sex offender Terapon Adhahn was sentenced to life in prison without parole last year for that crime.

After Linnik's murder, Gregoire created a task force to analyze how law enforcement deals with convicted sex offenders in the community.

The first wave of changes included putting all Level III sex offenders, who are considered most likely to re-offend, on global positioning system (GPS) tracking.

GPS tracking has come under scrutiny in recent weeks after an offender wearing a tracking bracelet allegedly killed a 13-year-old girl in Clark County.

Sex-offender database: [www.icrimewatch.net/washington.php](http://www.icrimewatch.net/washington.php)

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