



Mike Morrison | Sheriff

Law and Justice Building | 401 Washington St. #1 | Wenatchee, WA 98801
Office (509) 667-6851 | Fax (509) 667-6860

For Immediate Release

Contact: Det. Sgt. Lewis

Incident #: 25C01460

Phone: 509-667-6851

Date: 4/8/2025

<http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/sheriff>

On 2/24/25, Chelan County Sheriff's Office Detectives were contacted by the Colorado Springs Police Department Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Unit. A mother in Colorado discovered a male claiming to be from Chelan County was having sexually explicit conversations with her 14-year-old daughter since November 2024. The male told the juvenile that he intended on travelling to Colorado to meet her. CCSO Detectives continued the investigation and identified 19-year-old John Vargas-Lopez as the suspect. Phone and social media records revealed an extensive pattern showing Vargas-Lopez posing as a younger teenage boy while soliciting sexually explicit photos and videos from juvenile females he met on Instagram and Snapchat. After records positively identified Vargas-Lopez as the suspect, CCSO Detectives and Deputies arrested him on 4/8/25 near his home in Peshastin. Vargas-Lopez was booked into the Chelan County Regional Justice Center for the following offenses:

- Sexual Exploitation of a Minor
- Communication with a Minor for Immoral Purposes
- Possession of a Minor Engaged in Sexually Explicit Conduct

Detective Bowthorpe is continuing the investigation and attempting to identify other victims who are believed to be from various locations throughout the United States.

Detective Sergeant Lewis states, "This case is a stark reminder of the realities of social media. The fact is, predators are actively using social media to prey on children and sexually exploit them. CCSO Detectives are committed to identifying and arresting those in our community who seek to harm or exploit children. Meanwhile, it is imperative that parents talk to their children about how to safely use social media, establish age-appropriate boundaries for cell phone and social media use, and maintain supervision of their communications."

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