



# EFFINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHIEF JASON McFARLAND

110 SOUTH 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET, EFFINGHAM, ILLINOIS 62401

---

## **SPECIAL NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Sandi Gillet [sgillet@effinghamil.com](mailto:sgillet@effinghamil.com)

Phone: 217-342-5326 Fax: 217-342-5345

**May 20, 2019**

### **Juveniles Charged in Criminal Damage Incident at Bliss Park**

An investigation conducted by Effingham Police regarding property damage at Bliss Park, 900 S. Park Street, has resulted in two juveniles being charged with Criminal Damage to Property.

Reports of damage estimated at close to \$700.00 occurred at Bliss Park on May 3, 2019 at approximately 1:50 P.M. Multiple items were damaged, including a closed-circuit television (CCTV) valued at \$90.00 and a newly planted tree valued at \$200.00, both owned by the City of Effingham, as well as a Pepsi vending machine valued at \$400.00, owned by Pepsi Mid America.

Video surveillance from the scene helped detectives identify three juveniles involved in the incident who were subsequently interviewed; two of the youths admitted to damaging the properties and after the case was reviewed by the Effingham County States Attorney's Office last Friday, those two juveniles were formally charged. One 13-Year-Old juvenile from Effingham faces a single count of Criminal Damage to Property; a second 14-Year-Old juvenile from Dieterich was charged with two counts of Criminal Damage to Property. All charges are Class A Misdemeanors.

Chief Jason McFarland commended the collaborative effort by both patrol officers and detectives, noting that a concerned resident immediately reported suspicious activity which officers promptly investigated. "Having a citizen who alerted authorities to the situation as it was happening helped officers immediately gather evidence and identify witnesses, which resulted in charges being filed in this case. This is a great example of residents working together with police to solve crimes and help keep our community a safe place to live," praised Chief McFarland. He reiterated the point, stating, "Reporting suspicious activities as they are occurring not only helps police investigate better, it also ultimately reduces criminal activity, as there is a better chance of identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators."

*If you see it, say it! The Effingham Police Department encourages you to call the Police Department immediately at 217-347-0774 to report suspicious activity in your neighborhood or business district. Information can be given anonymously by calling the CRIMESTOPPERS Tip Line at 217-347-6583. Anonymous callers can receive up to \$1,000 cash rewards.*