



RICHARD C. PFEIFFER, JR.

Columbus City Attorney

Contact: Bill R. Hedrick
Phone: 614.645.8874
Email: brhedrick@columbus.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City Attorney's Office Releases 2014 Theft Stats

Professional shoplifters hit retailers' bottom line more than ever before

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. released information today on the misdemeanor theft charges his office filed in 2014 and the numbers show a host of increases when compared to data from recent years.

The City Attorney's Prosecution Division filed a total of 4128 theft charges last year, a slight decrease of 1.7 percent from the record high of 4202 set in 2013. However, the total value of stolen merchandise recovered increased 15 percent to \$566,758 in 2014. The average value of each theft also increased, from \$128.43 in 2013 to \$137.29 last year.

“Retail theft is a daily battle,” said City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. “Some estimate that over \$10 billion in goods are stolen from U.S. merchants each year, costs which unfortunately get passed on to consumers.”

Another statistic that continued to trend higher in 2014 was the number of cases filed against repeat offenders, also known as serial thieves and professional shoplifters. Six years ago, 58 percent of theft charges involved repeat offenders whereas that number surged to 81 percent in 2014—meaning four out of five theft cases were perpetrated by individuals with prior criminal charges.

One such serial thief who contributed his share to the rising shoplifting statistics in 2014 is 21 year old Christopher Peters, known to authorities as “The Braveheart Bandit” for the distinctive blue tattoo across his face. Peters was caught stealing eight times last year and currently is wanted on three outstanding warrants after violating the conditions of his probation.

On March 30, 2014 Peters stole \$322.97 worth of assorted merchandise from Home Depot. On April 7th, he stole a \$379.99 Dyson vacuum cleaner from Anderson's and the following day he stole two more Dysons valued at \$848.99 from Target. On April 22nd he stole \$220 worth of clothes from Old Navy.

“I would call a professional shoplifter who chooses to get a blue triangle tattooed across his face stupid rather than brave, but we believe he was going for the William Wallace *Braveheart* look,” said Assistant City Prosecutor Bill R. Hedrick. “Mr. Peters should be easy to identify so we are hoping the public can help us track him down.”

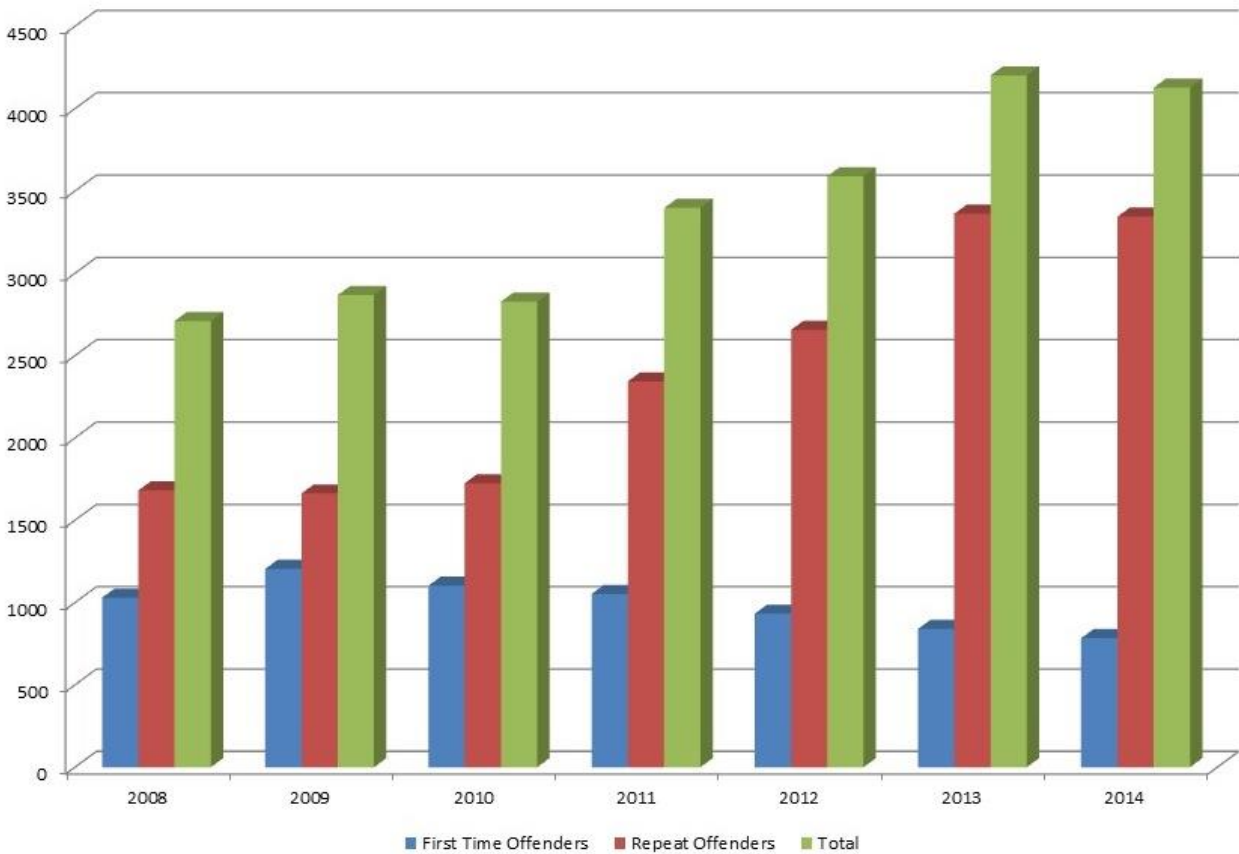
Peters also is a registered sex offender who is wanted on a felony charge for failing to reverify his address.

Anyone with information on Christopher Peters' whereabouts is asked to contact Bill R. Hedrick at 614.645.8874 or brhedrick@columbus.gov.

Per state law, the Columbus City Attorney's office prosecutes misdemeanor crimes, not felonies.

Misdemeanor Theft Charges Filed 2008-2014 – Columbus, Ohio

Year	First Time Offenders	Repeat Offenders	Total Cases	Total Value Recovered	Avg. Amount	Cases Over \$500
2006	N/A	N/A	2198	N/A	N/A	N/A
2007	N/A	N/A	2192	N/A	N/A	N/A
2008	1030	1681	2711	N/A	N/A	N/A
2009	1205	1663	2868	N/A	N/A	N/A
2010	1103	1725	2828	N/A	N/A	N/A
2011	1053	2344	3397	\$339,411.14	\$99.91	N/A
2012	933	2657	3590	\$422,940.19	\$117.81	134
2013	840	3362	4202	\$539,641.87	\$128.43	168
2014	784	3344	4128	\$566,758.34	\$137.29	204



WANTED

The Braveheart Bandit



CHRISTOPHER PETERS

DOB: 8/24/1993 (Age 21)

Height: 5'8" **Weight:** 200

Hair: Blonde **Eyes:** Blue

Last Known Address:

834 Hilock Rd.

Columbus, Ohio 43207

Revocation Warrants:

2014 CRB 010066 | 2014 CRB 010137 | 2014 CRA 031983

Charge(s):

2913.02 – Theft (two counts)

2950.06(F) – Failure to Reverify Address