

Man convicted of fondling boy at YMCA

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A 60-year-old Springfield man was convicted Tuesday of fondling a 15-year-old boy in the hot tub at the YMCA last spring.

Richard Seefeldt of Nottingham Road will be sentenced April 18 by Circuit Judge Leo Zappa. He was convicted of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, which is punishable by probation up to seven years in prison, said Randy Blue, assistant state's attorney.

A jury took about two hours to convict Seefeldt after hearing about two hours of testimony Tuesday morning.

The victim, now 16, said he went into the YMCA hot tub the afternoon of May 9. Seefeldt already was there. Under club rules, neither was clothed.

The victim said the two had a conversation about the hot tub. The jet near the youth wasn't working right. Seefeldt, the youth testified, reached over to adjust one setting and then reached over again to adjust a second setting, fondling him both times.

The victim said he didn't get out of the tub the first time because he was shocked. After Seefeldt repeated the actions, the boy said he got out, got dressed, and asked a YMCA employee to identify the offender, who still was in the hot tub. The boy then called his father, he said.

Seefeldt, who was represented by attorneys Dan Fultz and Mark Wykoff, testified that he and the boy exchanged casual conversation. He also confirmed that he reached over twice to adjust nozzles on the hot tub.

According to testimony, Seefeldt told a Springfield police officer he might have brushed his elbow against the victim's leg or stomach when he retreated back to his spot in the tub. However, Seefeldt did not include that in a written statement he gave police. Seefeldt said that was because he didn't think it happened.

Fultz noted that Seefeldt never left the facility, cooperated with police and never asked for an attorney while being interviewed.

"We didn't think the evidence supported the verdict, but we respect the jury's decision," Fultz said. Blue said he spoke with the victim's family after the verdict.

"They are very pleased with the result," he said, "and they're glad their son has been vindicated."

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