

NEWS RELEASE

**FROM: Catherine L. Hanaway
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NAYLOR MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

April 23, 2007

A Naylor, Missouri, man pled guilty today to charges of unlawful possession of a firearm, announced United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway.

JAMES D. WILLCUT, age 31, pled guilty to one felony count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of a firearm. He appeared before United States District Judge E. Richard Webber.

At his plea, Willcut admitted that on January 28, 2007, he obtained a Ruger, .22 caliber rifle from a storage compartment near his home in Ripley County, Missouri. The rifle had been placed in that storage compartment by his wife earlier on the previous day. Willcut took the firearm from his home, placed it in his vehicle, drove to his father's house in Naylor, Missouri, and then placed it in the back of his father's vehicle. The rifle was later recovered and turned over to Bureau of Alcohol,

Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agents. Due to Willcut's previous felony convictions, he is prohibited by law from possessing firearms.

Willcut now faces a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been set for July 23, 2007.

Hanaway praised the Ripley County Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) for their work on the case. Assistant United States Attorney Keith D. Sorrell handled the prosecution for the Government.