



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2007
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**PRISON GANG LEADER SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 32 YEARS IN
FEDERAL PRISON, WITHOUT PAROLE, ON METH AND FIREARM
CONVICTION IN *PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS* PROSECUTION**

DALLAS - Guadalupe Rodriguez, of Dallas, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Jane J. Boyle to 387 months (more than 32 years) in prison and four years of supervised release, announced U.S. Attorney Richard B. Roper of the Northern District of Texas. Rodriguez, 32, pled guilty in November 2006 to one count of possession of methamphetamine with the intent to distribute and one count of carrying and possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Rodriguez was held responsible for more than 662 grams of methamphetamine discovered in his possession during three separate traffic stops between December 2005 and June 2006. In each of these incidents, Rodriguez possessed loaded firearms, thousands of dollars in cash, drug distribution paraphernalia, and large amounts of methamphetamine.

On one occasion, on January 5, 2006, deputies with the Dallas Constable's Office received information that a late-model Chevrolet Tahoe, owned by Guadalupe Rodriguez, would be at a car wash in the vicinity of Story Road and Shady Grove Road in Irving, Texas. They also received information that Rodriguez always had a gun on his person, or in his vehicle, and that the gun, as well as narcotics, may be stored under the dash near the air conditioner vents or in the vehicle's door panels.

That afternoon, officers saw the Chevrolet Tahoe. The driver failed to signal when turning onto Story Road. The officers then stopped the car. Concerned about their safety, the officers asked the driver to roll down the back window because of its dark tint. Guadalupe Rodriguez, who was seated in the driver's side rear seat, advised the officers that the vehicle belonged to him and that he was not driving because he didn't have a valid drivers' license. During a search of the vehicle, officers found numerous hidden bags, along with baggies containing methamphetamine, and a glass pipe. In addition, the officers located nearly \$7000 in cash hidden in the driver's door panel along with a loaded .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol which had been reported stolen in Dallas. Officers also recovered a black case containing a gold-colored electronic palm scale in the rear seat of the vehicle, and a black duffel bag containing Rodriguez's clothing and one round of .40 caliber ammunition identical to the ammunition found in the gun.

Rodriguez, a leader of the prison gang Puro Tango Blast, received an enhanced sentence because he obstructed justice during the investigation and prosecution of his crimes. He gave government agents materially false information about his co-conspirators, including misleading law enforcement officers about the role of other individuals involved in his crimes. Rodriguez later contacted certain co-conspirators from prison and boasted of “cleaning up” their responsibility for the jointly-undertaken activities. Rodriguez also warned individuals that they were being investigated by law enforcement officers and suggested ways to avoid detection. Because of Rodriguez’s serious crimes, criminal history, and obstructive conduct, Judge Boyle sentenced him to the maximum sentence suggested by the federal sentencing guidelines, and cautioned that his participation in the prison gang was a “serious, insidious, and dangerous undertaking.”

U.S. Attorney Roper praised the investigative efforts of the Dallas Constable’s Office, the Grand Prairie Police Department, the Dallas Police Department Gang Unit and the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case is part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative, a federal program aimed toward the aggressive prosecution of gun crimes. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jordan A. Konig prosecuted the case.

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