



# ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Tampa Field Division

FY-08-05  
Contact: Paul C. Canup  
813-202-7366

For Immediate Release  
[www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)  
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## **JOINT INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF ARMED HOME INVASION CREW**

### *ATF Agents Arrest Five Suspects, Federal Charges Pending*

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – Special Agent in Charge Virginia O’Brien of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Tampa Field Division, along with Robert E. O’Neill, U.S. Attorney for the Middle Judicial District of Florida, Chief Charles Harmon of the St. Petersburg Police Department and Chief Dorene Thomas of the Pinellas Park Police Department, today announce the arrest of five individuals who were allegedly planning to commit an armed home invasion. These individuals were arrested Nov. 29, 2007, when they met with an ATF agent and a St. Petersburg police detective, who were working undercover. During this meeting the five individuals indicated that they were armed and prepared to commit the robbery.

According to the complaint, this two-month joint investigation focused on a violent armed robbery crew who also participated in trafficking firearms and selling illegal drugs. At the time of the arrest two members of the robbery crew were in possession of loaded .45 caliber pistols and one of the armed individuals told the undercover agents that, “If there are any police, I’m shooting.” All five individuals were disarmed and arrested without incident in St. Petersburg by ATF agents, St. Petersburg police officers and Pinellas Park police officers.

“This investigation is a result of ATF working closely with our local law enforcement partners to take the most violent offenders out of our communities. These agents and detectives are to be commended for placing themselves in extreme danger in order to protect the public from these armed predators,” O’Brien said.

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The following five individuals were arrested and will be charged with federal firearm and narcotics violations:

Neil C. Morris, 48, resident of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Dennis E. Ray, 44, resident of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Lawaun P. Wright, 49, resident of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Neil C. Johns, 27, resident of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Lance D. Hill, 24, resident of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Each individual is facing a potential 15 years to life imprisonment if convicted. A complaint is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of federal criminal laws and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

ATF is the federal law enforcement agency whose jurisdiction includes violent crimes involving firearms. More information on ATF and its programs can be found at [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov).

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