

NEWS RELEASE

FROM: CATHERINE L. HANAWAY
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Missouri



325 Broadway Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 (573) 334-3736

For Further Information, Call:
Assistant U. S. Attorney Abbie Crites-Leoni

CHICAGO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL GUN CHARGE

June 10, 2008

United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway announced today that a Chicago man pled guilty to a felony gun charge.

TIMOTHY DUANE RANKINS, 34, of Champaign, Illinois, entered a plea of guilty to one felony count of Felon in Possession of a Firearm. He appeared before U.S. District Judge Rodney W. Sippel on Tuesday, June 10, 2008 in St. Louis.

Rankins now faces a maximum of ten (10) years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine, followed by a period of supervised release of three years. Sentencing has been set for September 8, 2008 in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

With his plea, Rankins admitted that on March 9, 2007, at approximately 2:50 a.m., law enforcement officers in Pemiscot County observed a white Buick Park Avenue traveling

northbound on Interstate 55 at a high rate of speed. The Buick matched the description given by a dispatcher concerning a potential emergency situation. Law enforcement stopped the Buick on an exit ramp leading to the northbound Rest Area outside of Steele, Missouri.

One of the deputies on the scene asked Rankins if there was a gun in the vehicle and Rankins replied that there was a gun in the vehicle. Rankins added that he placed the gun in the trunk of the car on the driver's side near the bumper. The deputy located a gun in the location described by Rankins and then secured the firearm, which was a .357 magnum caliber, revolver.

After the gun was secured, Rankins explained that the gun was his and that he had gotten the gun from someone in Memphis. Rankins also knew that there were five rounds of ammunition in the gun, even though the capacity was actually six.

Hanaway commended the Pemiscot County Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for their combined efforts to prosecute this case. Assistant United States Attorney Abbie Crites-Leoni handled the prosecution for the Government.