



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May 21, 2009

ODESSA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DESTRUCTION OF TANK BATTERIES

John E. Murphy, Acting United States Attorney, announced that this afternoon in Midland, 27-year-old Steven Wayne Jones of Odessa pleaded guilty to six counts of destruction of an energy facility. Each count carries a maximum prison sentence of 20 years and a \$250,000 fine.

In his plea before United States Magistrate Judge B. Dwight Goains, Jones admitted that in the early morning hours of May 17, 2008, Jones set fires to six oil production tank batteries owned or serviced by Plains Marketing Company, which had fired Jones as a transport truck driver the day before. At each facility, all of which were located in Ector or Crane counties, Jones opened valves causing crude oil to be released onto the ground. Jones then set fire to the oil, which spread over the production equipment and into the surrounding brush. Jones' actions caused a significant disruption of the functions of the tank batteries and required substantial clean up and repairs.

Sentencing in this matter is expected to occur withing the next 90 days.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation-led Permian Basin Oilfield Theft Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Jeff Parras is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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