

PRESS RELEASE

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SENTENCING IN ST. CROIX TRIBAL DRUG INVESTIGATION

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Manley L. Williams, 42, Luck, Wis., was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Madison to 100 months in prison without parole. Williams previously pleaded guilty to distributing approximately 18 grams of crack cocaine with co-defendant Joseph Merrill.

On September 9, 2006, an undercover Special Agent from the Wisconsin Department of Justice, working with a confidential informant, arranged to purchase crack cocaine from Manley Williams. Joseph Merrill drove Williams to the drug deal, which took place outside Trego, Wis., and the undercover agent purchased 18.5 grams of crack cocaine.

Co-defendant Joseph Merrill was sentenced on February 27, 2009 to four years in prison without parole. Merrill's sentence was reduced below the mandatory minimum sentence based on his early cooperation in this investigation and his willingness to testify at Williams' trial.

United States Attorney Peterson stated that Williams' sentencing is the second resulting from a long-term investigation being conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation; Federal Bureau of Investigation; St. Croix Tribal Police Department; Rice Lake Police Department; Barron County Sheriff's Department; Burnett County Sheriff's Department; Polk County Sheriff's Department; the Native American Drug & Gang Initiative; and Wisconsin State Patrol. Peterson stated that the investigation is continuing and additional indictments and arrests are expected.

Prosecution of the cases is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil.

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