

PRESS RELEASE

Erik C. Peterson
United States Attorney
Western District of Wisconsin
(608) 264-5158
TTY (608) 264-5006
www.usdoj.gov/usao/wiw

For Immediate Release

May 7, 2009

Contact Person

Meredith Duchemin
Assistant U.S. Attorney

FORT ATKINSON MAN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

Jesse Sundal Participated in Firearms Trafficking Scheme

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Jesse Sundal, 32, Fort Atkinson, Wis., was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to four years in prison for possessing firearms as an unlawful user of a controlled substance. Sundal pleaded guilty to the offense on February 26, 2009.

The investigation began in December 2007 when a firearm with an obliterated serial number was found during a criminal search warrant in Canada. The firearm's serial number was forensically recovered and eventually traced back to a purchase of multiple firearms by Sundal from a Delavan, Wis. gun shop earlier in 2007.

Further investigation revealed that Sundal, a United States citizen, was involved in an international firearms trafficking scheme with individuals from Canada. Sundal would purchase firearms in the United States from legitimate dealers and then obliterate the serial numbers so the firearms could not be traced back to him. An

individual from Canada would travel to Wisconsin, pick up the firearms from Sundal, and transport them to Canada.

On October 6, 2008, a vehicle driven by one of the Canadians was stopped by the Michigan State Patrol and the trooper located five plastic vacuum-sealed bags in a hidden compartment of the vehicle near the gas tank. Each bag contained a pistol with an obliterated serial number and two magazines of ammunition. The Canadian individual admitted that he had just picked up the firearms from Sundal and was on his way back to Canada.

In connection with the investigation, law enforcement agents also conducted a search at a residence in Fort Atkinson, where they located approximately ten kilograms of marijuana belonging to the defendant. Agents also located the tool Sundal used to obliterate the serial numbers on the firearms.

Under federal law, it is illegal to possess firearms with obliterated serial numbers or to possess firearms while an unlawful user of a controlled substance, including marijuana.

The charges against defendant were the result of an investigation conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the Michigan State Patrol; and the Ontario Provincial Police in Canada. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Meredith P. Duchemin.

###