



## U.S. Department of Justice

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August 2, 2011

### **LAKE IN THE HILLS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHARGES IN CONNECTION WITH ACQUIRING AND POSSESSING DEADLY NEUROTOXIN**

ROCKFORD PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, ROBERT D. GRANT, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and ALVIN PATTON, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Field Office of Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, today made the following announcement:

Today in federal court, **EDWARD F. BACHNER, IV**, 38, formerly of Lake in the Hills, Illinois, pled guilty to federal charges of possession of a neurotoxin, Tetrodotoxin (TTX) with the intent to use it as a weapon, wire fraud and filing a false tax claim. Bachner was originally arrested on June 30, 2008, and has remained in federal custody since that date.

Bachner was indicted on August 26, 2008, and charged with unlawfully acquiring and possessing a neurotoxin, Tetrodotoxin, to use as a weapon on five separate occasions between November 7, 2006, and June 30, 2008, and possessing TTX in a quantity that was not reasonably justified by a prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purpose. Bachner was initially charged by a federal criminal complaint on June 30, 2008. As set forth in that complaint, Tetrodotoxin is a neurotoxin that has no known antidote and can only be treated with supportive therapy in an attempt to lessen the severity of the symptoms. Tetrodotoxin is naturally found in certain animal species, including puffer fish, and consumption of these animals can result in natural poisoning. Dependent largely upon the amount of poisoning, Tetrodotoxin has a historical fatality rate of 50-60%. If death occurs, it is usually due to respiratory paralysis and can occur within 6-24 hours.

On June 16, 2009, Bachner was charged in a superseding indictment that contained the original charges and added six new counts: one count of wire fraud alleging that Bachner engaged in a scheme to obtain TTX to kill an individual to collect \$20 million in life insurance proceeds; one count of soliciting another in 2005 to commit a federal felony involving the use of force; one count of using an interstate facility for murder for hire in 2005; and three counts of filing false claims for federal income tax refunds.

According to the plea agreement, Bachner engaged in a scheme to obtain money from insurance companies. Bachner admitted in the plea agreement that he fraudulently purchased a \$20 million life insurance policy on an individual identified in the plea agreement only as "Individual A." Bachner planned to profit from the death of Individual A by collecting the life insurance proceeds. In addition, Bachner also admitted to posing as "Dr. Edmund Backer" and obtaining TTX, a deadly neurotoxin, in order to use it as a weapon. Finally, Bachner acknowledged in the plea agreement to filing false federal income tax returns for tax years 2005, 2006, and 2007, and obtaining fraudulent tax refunds in excess of \$300,000.

Sentencing for Bachner will be conducted on December 8, 2011, at 2:30 p.m. Bachner faces a combined maximum potential penalty of life in prison, up to 11 years of supervised release following imprisonment, a fine of up to \$750,000, or twice the gross gain or gross loss resulting from that offense, whichever is greater, as well as any restitution ordered by the court. The actual sentence would be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by the Joint Terrorism Task Force of the FBI and the Rockford Office of Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division. The Chicago FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force is comprised of FBI Special Agents, Officers from the Chicago Police Department, and representatives from approximately 20 other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The case is being prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorneys Mark T. Karner and Michael D. Love.

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