



U.S. Department of Justice

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**ALGONQUIN MAN INDICTED ON
FEDERAL MURDER FOR HIRE CHARGES**

Rockford – An Algonquin, Ill. man was indicted today and charged with seven counts of using interstate facilities in a murder-for-hire scheme. The indictment alleges that between Aug. 1 and 4, 2011, **JASON W. SMIEKEL**, 29, of Algonquin, Illinois, used his cell phone and car with the intent that a murder-for-hire be committed. If convicted, Smiekel faces up to 10 years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine for each count. Smiekel is scheduled to be arraigned on the charges tomorrow, Aug. 17, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. before federal Magistrate Judge P. Michael Mahoney.

Smiekel was arrested in Elgin, Ill. on August 4, 2011, on a murder-for-hire charge. A criminal complaint was filed against Smiekel the following morning in federal court in Rockford, charging him with using a cell phone in a murder-for-hire scheme. The criminal complaint alleged that Smiekel was arrested in the parking lot of a restaurant in Elgin after passing \$7,000 in cash to an undercover ATF special agent who was posing as a “hitman.” The murder was purportedly scheduled to take place later that day around 5:30 p.m.

The indictment was announced today by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Andrew L. Traver, Special Agent-In-

Charge of the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The ATF's Rockford office conducted the investigation, with the assistance of the Algonquin Police Department. A copy of the indictment will available at <http://www.justice.gov/usao/iln/pr/rockford/2011/index.html>.

The government was represented by Assistant United States Attorney John G. McKenzie.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving that defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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