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**LECOMPTE, LA MAN SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IN PRISON FOR  
SHOOTING AT HOME OF THREE HISPANIC MEN**

**Alexandria, La.:** United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today that Johnny Mathis, 48, of Lecompte, La., was sentenced to 15 years in prison by U.S. District Court Judge Dee Drell for shooting at the home of three Hispanic men because of the victims' race and national origin.

Testimony at today's sentencing hearing established that on June 15, 2008, Mathis fired three shots from a shotgun at the home of three Hispanic men who lived across the street from Mathis' home in the Western District of Louisiana. After hearing two shots, the victims fled their house. Once outside, the victims watched as Mathis fired a third shot into the trees and then entered the victims' house, left briefly and then returned. Minutes later, the victims' house was engulfed in flames as Mathis exited. Subsequent investigation determined that the fire started in the kitchen where the victims had seen Mathis.

Mathis pleaded guilty on April 27, 2011, to criminal interference with the right to fair housing and using a firearm during a crime of violence.

"This kind of senseless and violent act has no place in this country. All people, regardless of race, have a right to be safe in their homes," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "The Justice Department is committed to prosecuting those who violate our most critical federal civil rights laws."

U.S. Attorney Finley stated, "Everyone should feel safe, especially in the place where they live. We hope today's sentence sends a message that this type of activity is not taken lightly. Law enforcement will continue to investigate, and our office will continue to prosecute those who interfere with the right of others to peacefully live in their homes."

The case was investigated by the FBI, and it was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary Mudrick of the Western District of Louisiana and Nicole Lee Ndumele, a Trial Attorney in the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

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