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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, July 25, 2011
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/MN

Hawley man pleads guilty to illegally possessing three firearms

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court in Duluth, a man from the northwestern community of Hawley pleaded guilty to possessing three firearms illegally. Timothy Loyal Burnside, age 48, pleaded guilty to one count of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person in connection to the crime. Burnside, who was indicted on May 18, 2011, entered his plea before United States District Court Judge Donovan W. Frank.

In his plea agreement, Burnside admitted that on April 1, 2011, he possessed at least three firearms. However, Burnside is prohibited under federal law from possessing firearms because of previous misdemeanor convictions for domestic violence. Between 2007 and 2008, he was convicted three times in North Dakota for domestic violence. Eight firearms were seized on April 1, 2011, during the execution of a search warrant at his residence, including three .22-caliber rifles, two .30-caliber rifles, a 12-gauge shotgun, a .22-caliber revolver, and a .38-caliber derringer pistol.

For his crime, Burnside faces a potential maximum penalty of ten years in prison. Judge Frank will determine his sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. This case is the result of an investigation by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Clay County Sheriff's Office. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney LeeAnn K. Bell.

Note, this case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods ("PSN"), an initiative launched by the U.S. Justice Department in 2001 to promote a multi-jurisdictional, comprehensive approach to reducing gun crime in America. PSN provides resources to strengthen law enforcement and crime prevention partnerships that work to make our communities safer.

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