



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**B. Todd Jones,
United States Attorney**

**Jeanne F. Cooney
Director of Community Relations
(612) 664-5611
email: jeanne.cooney@usdoj.gov**

News Release

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Federal jury convicts Brandon felon for possessing a 12-gauge shotgun and .22-caliber rifle

MINNEAPOLIS – Yesterday in federal court in Duluth, a jury found a felon from the west-central community of Brandon, Minnesota, guilty of possessing two firearms. On July 27, 2011, Jeffrey Allen Stoltz, age 48, was convicted on one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Stoltz was indicted on March 15, 2011.

According to the indictment and the evidence presented at trial, on June 29, 2010, Stoltz possessed a 12-gauge shotgun and a .22-caliber rifle. A Douglas County complaint states that on November 16, 2010, Stoltz was stopped by police for a traffic violation on State Highway 55, east of Lowry, Minnesota. The vehicle had been seen by authorities leaving a residence that was under surveillance as part of a narcotics' investigation. Officers found a digital scale and \$741 in cash on Stoltz, who provided a false name and was arrested by the Pope County Sheriff deputies. Then, during the execution of a search warrant on the vehicle Stoltz had been driving, police found two receipts from an Alexandria pawn shop that showed Stoltz had pawned the guns on June 29, 2010.

Because Stoltz had at least one previous felony conviction, he was prohibited under federal law from possessing firearms at any time. His prior convictions included third-degree burglary (Chippewa County in 1989 and Stearns County in 1993), first-degree burglary (Benton County in 2003), fleeing a peace officer (Douglas County in 2003), and being a felon in possession of a firearm (Douglas County in 2003). Since many of his prior felony convictions were for violent crimes, he will be subject to the federal armed career criminal statute when sentenced in the current federal case. That statute mandates a minimum of 15 years in federal prison. He faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. United States District Court Judge Richard H. Kyle will determine Stoltz's sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the West Central Minnesota Narcotics Task

Force, the Pope County Sheriff's Office, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Andrew S. Dunne and Clifford B. Wardlaw.

Note, this case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, 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 are working to make our streets and communities safer.

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