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# **News Release**

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## **Felon sentenced for possessing a .22-caliber revolver**

MINNEAPOLIS – Yesterday in federal court in St. Paul, a 42-year-old felon was sentenced for possessing a .22-caliber revolver. On September 7, 2011, United States District Court Judge Richard H. Kyle sentenced Robert Ellis Hastings, of Cascade Township in Olmsted County, to 180 months on one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm. Hastings was indicted on January 19, 2011, and pleaded guilty on June 13, 2011.

In his plea agreement, Hastings admitted he possessed the gun on September 13, 2010. On that day, police conducted a traffic stop involving a car driven by Hastings. There were two people in the vehicle. At the time of the stop, the passenger exited the car and fled on foot. During the foot pursuit, a deadly force incident occurred between law enforcement and the passenger resulting in the passenger's death. Law enforcement officers seized and executed a search warrant on the Honda. In the trunk, law enforcement officers found a loaded H&R Sportman, .22-caliber revolver.

Because he is a felon, Hastings cannot legally possess firearms or ammunition at any time. His prior felony convictions include seven in North Carolina: breaking and entering in 1989 and 1995; felon in possession of a firearm in 1992; robbery in 1993 and 2000 and two felony convictions from Wisconsin, one of them for bail jumping in 2004 and the other for aggravated battery with intent to cause great harm in that same year.

This case was the result of an investigation by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Southeast Minnesota Narcotics and Gang Task Force, the Olmsted County Sheriff's Office, Wabash County Sheriff's Office, the Rochester Police Department and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Dees.

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 streets and communities safer.

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