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**ROCKFORD MAN SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARM**

ROCKFORD -- PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; ANDREW L. TRAVER, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; and CHET EPPERSON, Chief of the Rockford Police Department, today made the following announcement:

United States District Judge Philip G. Reinhard today sentenced ERIC L. JACKSON, 25, Rockford, Illinois, to 8 years in the Bureau of Prisons for illegally possessing a firearm on June 1, 2007. Jackson was also ordered to serve a period of 3 years of supervised release upon his release from imprisonment. There is no parole in the federal system.

As part of his plea agreement entered on December 17, 2007, Jackson admitted that on June 1, 2007, he was a convicted felon who was on parole from the Illinois Department of Corrections. At approximately 8:30 a.m. on June 1, he was arrested on two outstanding warrants while at 1107 Elm Street in Rockford. He was in possession of a loaded black Taurus .38 caliber revolver at the time, which he had hidden under a blanket on which he was laying with a small child next to him.

At today's sentencing hearing, Judge Reinhard also found that Jackson was responsible for a shooting at 1118 Furman Avenue in Rockford on March 31, 2007. One person was shot in the chest during that incident. Shortly after the shooting, Jackson fled from police in a car and then on foot. Jackson left behind a loaded .38 caliber revolver in the glove compartment of the vehicle, which police recovered.

Jackson was charged in federal court as part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program. Project Safe Neighborhoods is an intensive, cooperative effort between local, state, and federal law enforcement to attack gun crimes. The cornerstone of the program is that every defendant committing an offense involving a gun will be reviewed for possible federal prosecution in order to obtain the harshest penalties for the worst offenders. Additional information about Project Safe Neighborhoods may be found at www.psn.gov.

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Rockford Police Department. The case was prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Michael F. Iasparro.

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