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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HYATTSVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO POSSESSION OF
DESTRUCTIVE DEVICE, BIOLOGICAL WEAPON**

Greenbelt, Maryland - Allen F. Loucks, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announces that today Myron Tereshchuk, age 43, of Hyattsville, Maryland pleaded guilty before U.S. District Court Judge Roger W. Titus to crimes committed in connection with his possession of ricin and improvised hand grenades at his home on March 10, 2004. Ricin constitutes a biological weapon under federal law, and the possession of improvised destructive devices is also a federal offense.

According to the agreed statement of facts presented to the court and an affidavit in support of a search warrant, Tereshchuk had been involved in harassing a business competitor, an intellectual property firm that produces and distributes patent and trademark information, and provides services relating to patent file histories, also referred to as file wrappers. Tereshchuk has a small file wrapper business called Potomac Filewrapper Service. FBI agents arrested Tereshchuk on March 10, 2004 on extortion charges.

According to the statement of facts, upon Tereshchuk's arrest on March 10, 2004, FBI agents searched his residence and found firearms, grenade hulls, chemicals, explosive powder, firecrackers

and items suspected of relating to ricin production. Tereshchuk possessed large quantities of castor beans, from which ricin is distilled and processed, as well as tools and literature that would assist the production of ricin. Very small quantities of ricin are fatal to humans if injected into the bloodstream. Also found were 8 grenade hulls which had been modified by placing epoxy on the bottom aperture. According to FBI experts, epoxy sealed grenade bodies, smokeless powder, modified M-98 firecrackers and M-80 firecrackers, all found at his residence, could be readily assembled into non-electric improvised explosive devices with minimal effort. Tereshchuk acknowledges that he did not have any registration which would allow him to possess the ricin and grenade components.

Tereshchuk faces a maximum penalty of 15 years for possession of ricin and a destructive device. Judge Titus scheduled sentencing for August 18, 2005 at 4:00 p.m. The defendant is currently serving a federal sentence in connection with his guilty plea in the Eastern District of Virginia to the extortion charges.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Prince George's County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Team and Bomb Squad and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James M. Trusty.