



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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DECEMBER 22, 2005
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO METH CONSPIRACY

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a defendant pleaded guilty in federal court today to his role in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

John Merced Lozano, 41, address unknown, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning to all four counts contained in a Sept. 30, 2005, federal indictment.

Lozano admitted that he participated in a conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute 500 grams or more of methamphetamine from Feb. 1 to Sept. 3, 2005. **Lozano**, a convicted felon, also admitted that he was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .38-caliber revolver, a Beretta semi-automatic .25-caliber pistol, a Taurus .45-caliber pistol, and assorted ammunition during the time of the conspiracy. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearms or ammunition. **Lozano** also admitted that he possessed those firearms during and in relation to the drug trafficking conspiracy.

By pleading guilty today, **Lozano** also agreed to forfeit to the government any property derived from the proceeds of the drug trafficking conspiracy, including \$1,268 that was seized from him at the time of his arrest on July 24, 2005.

Under federal statutes, **Lozano** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison without parole, up to life in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$4.5 million. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathleen D. Mahoney. It was investigated by the Buchanan County Drug Strike Force, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms

and Explosives, and the St. Louis County, Mo., Sheriff's Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html