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**CHARLES COUNTY ARSONIST PATRICK WALSH PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL  
POSSESSION OF A FIREARM AND CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE ECSTASY**

*Greenbelt*, Maryland - Patrick Walsh, age 22, of Fort Washington, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm and conspiracy to distribute ecstasy, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein.

According to the plea agreement presented to the court, on October 21, 2004 Walsh purchased a P-90 Ruger, 45 caliber handgun and a Rossi 357 Magnum handgun. At the time, Walsh illegally used 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), commonly known as ecstasy and therefore, his possession of the firearms was illegal. From January to December 2004 Walsh also conspired with others to obtain and redistribute at least 750 tablets of ecstasy. The amount of ecstasy attributable to Walsh is equivalent to 93.74 kilograms of marijuana.

Walsh faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison followed by 3 years of supervised release for the gun charge and 20 years in prison followed by 3 years of supervised release for the drug conspiracy. U.S. District Judge Roger W. Titus scheduled sentencing for March 23, 2007 at 9:00 a.m.

Walsh was previously convicted by a federal jury in September, 2005 of conspiracy to commit arson and 35 counts of arson in connection with the December 6, 2004 fire at the Hunter's Brooke development in Charles County, Maryland, and sentenced to 235 months in prison.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the investigation coordinated by a task force which includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal and the Charles County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Rosenstein also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Chan Park, who prosecuted the case.