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REISTERSTOWN WOMAN SENTENCED FOR ARSON

Baltimore, Maryland - U.S. District Judge William M. Nickerson sentenced Michele Heckner, age 40, of Reisterstown, Maryland, today to five years in prison followed by three years of supervised release for setting fire on May 31, 2005 to a business known as Lady Baltimore Flooring, located at 2874 Baltimore Boulevard, Finksburg, Maryland where she was employed, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. Judge Nickerson also ordered that Heckner pay restitution of \$397,144.90.

According to the plea agreement presented to the court, Heckner also attempted to blow up the propane tanks near the outside wall of the building. Prior to arriving at the arson scene, Heckner called a veterinary clinic adjacent to the building of the flooring company to ensure that no one was present to see her. An accelerant, similar to kerosene or lighter fluid, was found inside the building; and acetone, a flammable liquid, was found outside at the base of the propane tanks. The property sustained damages in excess of \$400,000.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the investigative work performed by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney A. David Copperthite, who is prosecuting the case.