



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **JURY CONVICTS ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARM**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that a federal jury convicted an armed career criminal of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

**Ben Mullins**, 44, of Springfield, was found guilty by a federal trial jury of being felon in possession of a firearm on Oct. 28, 2004.

Following the presentation of evidence in **Mullins'** trial, Graves said, the jury in U.S. District Court in Springfield deliberated for approximately 20 minutes before returning the guilty verdict to U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner, ending a trial that began on Oct. 26, 2004.

The federal jury found **Mullins** guilty of being a felon in possession of a Mondial Brevettata .22-caliber starter gun on Oct. 14, 2002, in Greene County, Mo. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of a firearm or ammunition. **Mullins** has a 1990 criminal felony conviction for resisting arrest, two 1984 criminal felony convictions for burglary and assault and a 1979 criminal felony conviction for robbery. **Mullins'** criminal history classifies him as an armed career criminal, Graves said.

**Mullins** was found in possession of the firearm, Graves said, after law enforcement officers responded to a call regarding a break-in at the Calvary Temple Assembly of God Church, located on Grand Street in Springfield. Upon arriving at the church, law enforcement officers observed **Mullins** inside the building.

Under federal statutes, **Mullins** may 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 \$250,000. 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 Special Assistant U.S. Attorney James J. Kelleher. It was investigated by the Springfield, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

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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](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)