



# ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Chicago Field Division

For Immediate Release  
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## **CHICAGO RESIDENT CONVICTED OF ILLEGALLY POSSESSING A FIREARM**

CHICAGO -- PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; ANDREW L. TRAVER, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF); today made the following announcement:

A jury convicted **JAMES THOMAS**, age 47, 5654 South Winchester, Chicago, Illinois, in federal court in Chicago yesterday of the federal charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The evidence at trial showed that on March 30, 2006, Thomas held a Dan Wesson .357 magnum revolver to the head of a victim when two Chicago Police Officers responded to the 5500 block of South Wolcott in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood. As the officers approached Thomas, he ran away and threw the gun. The officers were able to arrest Thomas and recover the gun immediately. The jury found that Thomas was a convicted felon and knowingly possessed the gun, which had traveled across state lines prior to his possession of it.

Project Safe Neighborhoods is an intensive, cooperative effort between local, state, and federal law enforcement to attack gun crimes. The cornerstone of the program is that every state defendant with a gun will be reviewed for possible federal prosecution in order to obtain the harshest penalties for the worst offenders. Additional information about Project Safe Neighborhoods may be found at [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov).

Sentencing for Thomas will be conducted on November 29, 2007, at 12:00 p.m. Thomas faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. The actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines. Thomas was charged in federal court on September 26, 2006, and has remained in federal custody since then.

The Chicago Office of ATF and the Chicago Police Department investigated this case. Assistant United States Attorneys Brandon D. Fox and Lindsay Jenkins prosecuted the case for the government.

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