



Department of Justice

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ATLANTA MAN SENTENCED TO OVER TWO DECADES IN PRISON FOR HEROIN TRAFFICKING

Atlanta, GA - ROGER HAMMOND, 30, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Timothy C. Batten to serve over 23 years in federal prison on a charge of heroin trafficking.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This defendant has dealt drugs most of his adult life, generally stopping only when incarcerated. Sadly, it is believed the defendant's drug dealing contributed to the death of at least two individuals. The English Avenue community where he distributed heroin has been plagued by drugs for many years. These drugs brought with them other types of crime and made life in this community difficult. The stiff sentence in this case is a reminder to those who distribute drugs that they may face decades behind bars for their crimes."

"Directly or indirectly, Roger Hammond dealt in death," said Special Agent in Charge Gregory Gant of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Atlanta Field Division. "Unlike his customers, law enforcement will never develop a tolerance for heroin. It is only fitting that this dealer who claimed to supply the 'best' heroin in Georgia, is in return supplied with the best possible prison sentence the federal government can offer."

HAMMOND was sentenced to 23 years, 5 months in prison to be followed by 8 years of supervised release. There is no parole in the federal system. He pleaded guilty to the charge on November 10, 2008.

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and information presented in court: Despite a lengthy criminal history and the fact he was on state parole at the time, beginning in March 2008 HAMMOND sold heroin several times to a confidential informant working at the direction of agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This was only 10 months after he had entered a plea in an unrelated DeKalb County drug case. Specifically, on March 26, May 13, and June 11, he sold 20.1 grams, 29.4 grams and 48.9 grams of heroin to the informant. A fourth deal was arranged on July 29, 2008, to sell the informant 80 grams of heroin for \$10,000. Before HAMMOND could complete the sale, however, he was arrested by troopers with the Georgia State Patrol. Inside his car, the

troopers found 34.5 grams of heroin and \$9,952. Inside a nearby hotel room rented by HAMMOND, agents located another \$17,025 in drug proceeds.

In a written confession, HAMMOND admitted that he had distributed heroin on a daily basis until his arrest and that he had distributed at least 100 grams of heroin in the previous year. He added that he purchased the 34.5 grams of heroin that was seized for \$2,800. HAMMOND also told agents that he had made more than 100 purchases of heroin and that his source of supply had the best heroin in the state of Georgia. He added that this source, on average, would “front” him 50 to 80 grams of heroin two to three times a month. In his own words, the heroin was “pure, uncut and A-1 grade.” When he was asked whether he had heard of anyone dying from the use of the heroin, HAMMOND told the agents that a drug user named “Dave” turned blue after taking heroin obtained from him and that another person had to “bring Dave back.”

Realizing there may be deaths associated with HAMMOND's distribution of drugs, law enforcement agents expanded the investigation. ATF's investigation eventually determined that at least two individuals died after consuming heroin distributed by HAMMOND. Autopsy results noted that the individuals had alcohol and other drugs in their systems and, consequently, the coroner could not conclude definitively the heroin HAMMOND distributed caused their deaths. The Court was told today that in fact, both individuals had heroin in their bodies that HAMMOND supplied.

The sentence imposed on HAMMOND also reflects his extensive criminal history, including six drug-related felony offenses, including three for selling heroin. He has convictions ranging from driving on a suspended license to battery--12 separate felony convictions in all, as well as countless other encounters with law enforcement.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Atlanta Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney Kurt R. Erskine prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.