



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois
Western Division*

*Joseph C. Pedersen
Assistant U.S. Attorney*

*308 West State Street - Room 300
Rockford, Illinois 61101*

*PH: (815) 987-4444
FAX: (815) 987-4236*

May 12, 2005

FREEPORT MAN ARRESTED ON FEDERAL DRUG AND GUN CHARGES

ROCKFORD -- 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; LARRY G. TRENT, Director of the Illinois State Police; RICHARD MEYERS, Winnebago County Sheriff; JERRY WHITMORE, Chief of the Freeport Police Department; and STEVEN PUGH, Chief of the Rockford Police Department, today made the following announcement:

Today ATF agents arrested **ERIC WAGNER**, 32 (DOB: 6/10/1972), of 102 West Douglas, Freeport Illinois, on federal gun trafficking and drug dealing charges resulting from a federal indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Rockford yesterday. The indictment charges Wagner with eight counts of selling a firearm to a felon and eight counts of illegally distributing marijuana.

Wagner will appear before United States Magistrate Mahoney at 2:30 p.m. today for his initial appearance. If convicted of the crimes charged in the indictment, Wagner faces a maximum potential penalty of up to 10 years in prison without parole on each of the firearms charges, and a maximum penalty of up to 5 years in prison without parole on each of the drug distribution charges. If convicted, the actual sentence will be determined by a United States District Court Judge, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by the Rockford office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, & Explosives, the Freeport Police Department, the Illinois State Police State Line Area Narcotics Team, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department, the Rockford Police Department, and the Rockford-Winnebago County Metro Narcotics Unit. The case is being prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph C. Pedersen.

Members of the public are reminded that a criminal indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

#####