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**ROCKFORD MAN SENTENCED TO 7 YEARS IN PRISON  
FOR POSSESSING A FIREARM AS A CONVICTED FELON**

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 (ATF); PAUL A. LOGLI, Winnebago County State's Attorney; and CHET EPPERSON, Rockford Police Chief, today made the following announcement:

Today, United States District Judge Philip G. Reinhard sentenced **CRAIG L. WISE**, age 26, Rockford, Illinois, to 7 years in federal prison, without parole, for possessing a firearm as a convicted felon. The court also ordered Wise to serve 3 years of supervised release following his release from prison.

Wise pleaded guilty on February 13, 2007. In pleading guilty, Wise admitted that on August 30, 2006, he possessed a loaded Colt .22 caliber handgun while riding as a passenger in a vehicle. Rockford Police Officers stopped the vehicle for a traffic violation and a subsequent search resulted in the seizure of the gun. Wise, who had been previously convicted of a felony, admitted he knowingly possessed the gun which had traveled across state lines prior to his possession of it.

First charged by the Winnebago County States Attorney's Office under state law, Wise was transferred to federal court where he was charged under tough federal firearms laws as part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program. 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).

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Rockford Police Department. The case was prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph C. Pedersen.

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