



**U.S. Department of Justice**

United States Attorney  
Northern District of Illinois

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**FEDERAL JURY FINDS ROCKFORD MAN GUILTY OF POSSESSING WITH  
INTENT TO DISTRIBUTE MARIJUANA, BEING A FELON IN POSSESSION  
OF A FIREARM AND POSSESSION A FIREARM IN FURTHERANCE OF A  
DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENSE**

ROCKFORD — A Rockford man was convicted today after a three-day, jury trial on federal firearms and drug charges. The defendant, Alex Alexander, 30, has been in state or federal custody since he was arrested.

Alexander was arrested on February 7, 2012 following a traffic stop conducted by officers of the City of Rockford Police Department. During this stop, the defendant, a convicted felon, was found in possession of baggies containing marijuana, drug trafficking paraphernalia and a loaded 45 caliber semiautomatic handgun.

Alexander faces a term of up to 30 years in prison on the charge of possession with intent to distribute marijuana and a \$2,000,000 fine. He also faces a minimum sentence of 15 years and a maximum sentence of life imprisonment on the charge of unlawful possession of a weapon by a felon if he is found to be an armed career criminal. In addition, because Alexander possessed a .45 caliber handgun in furtherance of a drug crime, he must also be sentenced to a consecutive five year term of imprisonment. Alexander will not be eligible for parole. Alexander also will be sentenced to a period of supervised release of 3 to 5 years

following release from prison. The actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

First charged by the Winnebago County States Attorney's Office under state law, Alexander 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 defendant charged in state court for an offense involving 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 jury's verdict was announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Andrew L. Traver, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; Joseph Bruscato, Winnebago County State's Attorney; and Chet Epperson, Rockford Police Chief.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mark Karner and Scott Paccagnini.

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