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Office of the United States Attorney
Western District of Wisconsin

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CHICAGO MAN CONVICTED OF DISTRIBUTING DRUGS IN WAUSAU

Madison, Wis. - Stephen P. Sinnott, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Lawrence Williams, 35, Chicago, was convicted yesterday evening of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and cocaine base after a two-day trial in federal court in Madison.

At the trial, the government presented evidence showing that Williams conspired with Johnny Bruce Mathews to sell cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana and ecstasy in Wausau from March 2007 to February 28, 2008. According to the government's evidence, Williams supplied one kilogram of cocaine a week to Mathews for a year. Mathews employed female drivers to transport the cocaine from Williams' apartment in Chicago to one of five stash houses Mathews had in Wausau.

According to the government's evidence, Williams cooked the cocaine into cocaine base (crack) for Mathews; created a code the two men used to communicate about their drug business over the phone; provided tips to Mathews on how to increase his sales efficiency in Wausau; advised how the drivers should act in the cars when transporting the cocaine from Chicago to Wausau; and advised Mathews on the use of cans with hidden compartments in them to store cash and cocaine.

The government also presented evidence showing that on February 28, 2008, members of the Marathon County Sheriff's Office, Special Investigations Unit, executed a search warrant on one of Mathews' stash houses in Wausau. Deputies found 216 grams of crack cocaine and 156 grams of powder cocaine in cans with secret compartments. They also found police scanners, a digital scale, boxes of baggies, and a cat food can filled with \$4,950 in cash in a secret compartment.

Mathews pleaded guilty in federal court on January 13, 2009, to possession with intent to distribute more than 50 grams of cocaine. He was sentenced to 20 years in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb on April 6, 2009.

The government established at the trial that Williams and Mathews trafficked over 33 kilograms of crack cocaine and over 11 kilograms of powder cocaine during the course of the conspiracy.

U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb scheduled sentencing for Williams for October 8, 2010. Williams faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

The charge against Williams was the result of an investigation conducted by the Marathon County Sheriff's Department, Special Investigations Unit.

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