

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**



*CATHERINE L. HANAWAY
United States Attorney*

NEWS RELEASE

For further information: Call Public Affairs Officer Jan Diltz at (314) 539-7719

August 13, 2007

For Immediate Release

**ST. CHARLES BAIL BONDSMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
MURDER-FOR-HIRE PLOT**

St. Louis, Missouri: Virgil Jackson, a St. Charles bail bondsman, plead guilty earlier today to charges involving a 2005 murder-for-hire plot to kill a rival bondsman, United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway announced today.

“Mr. Jackson admitted with his plea that he fully intended to have this man killed,” said Hanaway. “Due to the quick actions of the investigating agencies, a tragic situation was avoided.”

ATF Resident Agent in Charge Joy Branch-Enderlin said, “This investigation is a prime example of the value of investigative teamwork as it relates to the pursuit of violent criminal offenders in the St. Louis Metropolitan area.”

According to facts stated in court during the plea, in December 2004, Jackson confronted Gerald Cox, a rival bail bondsman and threatened to kill him, claiming that Cox was steering customers away from his business. Cox talked him out of it by promising to “make things right.” In January Jackson applied to the Missouri Division of Insurance for a general bail bond license, his application was denied in September 2005. In October 2005, in a series of telephone calls, Jackson arranged to meet with a confidential informant at a restaurant in St. Charles, Missouri, with instructions on how to kill Cox, and agreed to provide the informant with a firearm and bullets. After the meeting, they traveled to Cox's place of employment and Jackson showed him the method of the murder, which included shooting Cox outside his place of business and disposing of his body in the Missouri River at a landing area in St. Charles, Missouri.

VIRGIL LEE JACKSON, 67, of Winfield, Missouri, pled guilty to one felony count of murder for hire. He appeared before United States District Judge Henry E. Autrey.

Jackson now faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and/or a fine up to \$250,000, when he is sentenced on November 1, 2007.

Hanaway commended the work on the case by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), St. Charles Police Department, and Assistant United States Attorney Dean Hoag, who is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.