



Department of Justice

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Western District of Kentucky

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**FORMER HART COUNTY SHERIFF PLEADS GUILTY TO
POSSESSING UNREGISTERED SHORT BARREL RIFLES**

BOWLING GREEN, KY - **Jeffrey Allen Staples**, age 51, of Munfordville, Kentucky, Hart County, Kentucky, pled guilty to knowingly possessing unregistered firearms, namely modified rifles with short barrels, which were not registered to him in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record and one of which was not identified by a serial number as required by federal law, David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, and Paul Vido, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Louisville Field Division, jointly announced today.

Federal law classifies certain modified rifles as "firearms" which must be registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. A modified rifle must be registered if it has an overall length of less than 26 inches or a barrel of less than 16 inches in length. Additionally, all firearms, including modified rifles, which are required to be registered must be identified by a serial number.

Staples pled guilty under a written plea agreement. According to the plea agreement, Staples admitted that on or about October 7, 2005, Kentucky State Police officials obtained a state search warrant for Staples' residence in Hart County, Kentucky. Law enforcement officials executed the search warrant that same day. During the search, officers found several firearms. They found two modified rifles in Staples' bedroom, a Ruger, Model 10/22, .22 caliber rifle with

no serial number and an Ultra-Hi Products Co., Inc., Model 2200, .22 caliber rifle, bearing serial number T11488. One rifle had a barrel length of 5½ inches and an overall length of 13½ inches, while the other rifle had a barrel length of 2¾ inches and an overall length of 12½ inches.

Staples admitted that both firearms were his and that the weapons were illegal. Neither rifle was registered to Staples in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record as required by federal law.

Staples faces maximum potential penalties of 20 years' imprisonment, a \$500,000 fine, and supervised release for a period of 3 years.

Staples entered his guilty plea before United States District Judge Thomas B. Russell on February 5, 2008, in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Judge Russell scheduled Staples' sentencing hearing for May 5, 2008, at 11:00 a.m., in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Assistant United States Attorney Jo E. Lawless prosecuted the case. The Bowling Green Field Office of the ATF in close association with the Kentucky State Police, Drug Enforcement Special Investigations (DESI) unit conducted the investigation as part of ATF's mission to reduce violent crime and other threats to public safety.

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