

## NEWS RELEASE

**FROM: Catherine L. Hanaway  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Missouri**



**325 Broadway Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 (573) 334-3736**

---

*For Further Information, Call:  
Assistant U. S. Attorney Keith D. Sorrell*

---

## **VAN BUREN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MAKING AN ARSON THREAT BY TELEPHONE**

April 14, 2008

A Van Buren, Missouri man pled guilty today to making a threat, announced United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway.

**CHRISTOPHER BLACK**, age 48, pled guilty to one felony count of Making an Arson Threat by Telephone. He appeared before United States District Judge Henry E. Autrey.

At the plea, Black admitted that on September 1, 2007, he and a group of people went to the Current River Outfitters' campground in Van Buren, Missouri, to meet with some friends. The owner of the campground declined to allow the group to enter. Mr. Black and the owner became involved in a verbal altercation at the campground. Mr. Black left the campground, but called the owner by the use of Mr. Black's cell phone. The campground owner answered his cell

phone and spoke with Mr. Black. During that telephone call, Mr. Black stated that he was going to burn the campground owner's house. At the time of his statement, Mr. Black was acting voluntarily and intentionally.

Black now faces a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been set for July 21, 2008.

Hanaway praised the Van Buren Police Department, the Carter County Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives for their work on the case. Assistant United States Attorney Keith D. Sorrell handled the prosecution for the Government.