



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER STRAFFORD, MO., MAYOR PLEADS GUILTY TO \$544,000 FRAUD

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that the former mayor of Strafford, Mo., pleaded guilty in federal court today to defrauding a group of investors of more than \$544,000.

Alan Duane Baker, 48, of Strafford, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this morning to wire fraud. Graves explained that the charge involved a letter that was faxed to one of the victims of **Baker's** fraud scheme, a resident of Florida, on Aug. 20, 1999.

Baker was indicted by a federal grand jury Springfield on Sept. 11, 2002. **Baker**, an accountant, was the mayor of Strafford at the time of the indictment.

Baker solicited funds for an investment program from January 1998 to April 2000, Graves said, telling investors the program was paying a return of up to 30 percent per month. In reality, **Baker** admitted today, he did not invest the money as he had promised.

Baker also admitted in today's plea agreement that the total loss to his victims was \$544,743.

As a result of today's guilty plea, **Baker** could be subject to a sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000 and an order of restitution to his victims.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States

Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow