



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT CEASEFIRE
ARMED CAREER OFFENDER SENTENCED
15 YEARS FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARM

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Kansas City man was sentenced in federal court today for being a felon in possession of a firearm. The case marks additional progress under Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

Damon E. Hawkins, 30, of Kansas City, Mo., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning as an armed career offender to 15 years in federal prison without parole.

On May 9, 2003, **Hawkins** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Hawkins** admitted to illegally possessing a Smith and Wesson 9 mm pistol on Oct. 9, 2002. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Hawkins** has three criminal felony convictions, which classify him as an armed career offender. His criminal felony convictions were for unlawful use of a weapon in 1991, two counts of sale of a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of a school in 1992, and sale of a controlled substance in 1992.

Hawkins was initially charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in a criminal complaint filed on Oct. 9, 2002, in Kansas City. The criminal complaint was later replaced by an indictment that was returned by a federal grand jury on Oct. 15, 2002, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul S. Becker. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and

local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms for federal prosecution.

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