



U.S. Department of Justice

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**ALGONQUIN ATTORNEY PLEADS GUILTY TO
FEDERAL MURDER FOR HIRE CHARGE**

ROCKFORD — An Algonquin, Ill., attorney pleaded guilty today to using an interstate facility, a cell phone, in a murder-for-hire scheme. In pleading guilty, **JASON W. SMIEKEL**, 30, of Algonquin, admitted to using his cell phone with the intent that a murder-for-hire be committed. Smiekel faces up to 10 years of imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Smiekel is scheduled to be sentenced on July 17, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. by U.S. District Judge Frederick J. Kapala.

Smiekel was charged by indictment on August 16, 2011, with federal murder-for-hire charges. In his plea agreement, Smiekel admitted that in late July 2011, he asked an individual if that individual knew someone who would commit a murder-for-hire. The individual provided Smiekel with the first name and cellular telephone number for an ATF Special Agent acting in an undercover capacity. On August 1, 2011, Smiekel offered to pay the undercover agent \$20,000 to kill a certain person. The next day, Smiekel used his cell phone, a facility of interstate commerce, to arrange for a meeting with the undercover agent, where Smiekel gave \$1,500 in expense money and a photograph of the intended victim to the undercover agent. On August 4, 2011, after Smiekel paid \$7,000 more to the undercover agent as a partial payment for the murder, ATF agents arrested Smiekel at a restaurant in

Elgin, Ill.

The plea agreement was announced today by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Andrew L. Traver, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The ATF's Rockford office conducted the investigation, with the assistance of the Algonquin Police Department. A copy of the plea agreement will available at <http://www.justice.gov/usao/iln/pr/rockford/2012/index.html>.

The government was represented by Assistant United States Attorney John G. McKenzie.

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