

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced the unsealing of an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on April 24, 2008, charging Anthony J. Ptacek, 31, Rice Lake, Wis., with engaging in a scheme to defraud various lenders in the Eau Claire, Wis., area from 2001 through 2005.

The indictment was unsealed following Ptacek's arrest yesterday. Ptacek appeared in U.S. District Court in Madison today and has been detained pending another hearing next Tuesday. If convicted, Ptacek faces a maximum penalty of thirty years in prison on each of the six counts charged in the indictment.

Ptacek is charged with devising a scheme to defraud and obtain money from various lenders in Western Wisconsin from October 2001 through May 2005 by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises. The indictment alleges that as part of the scheme, Ptacek falsely inflated his reported income, inflated the value of collateral, and falsely represented that offered collateral was free of any other security interest. Further, the indictment alleges that Ptacek caused other individuals to apply for loans on his behalf and lie to lenders about their employment

and income.

The charges against Ptacek are the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution of this case has been assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura A. Przybylinski Finn.

You are advised that a charge is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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