

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**



**MICHAEL W. REAP**  
*Acting United States Attorney*

**NEWS RELEASE**

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***For further information call (314) 539-2200***

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For Immediate Release

**LOCAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS PLEAD GUILTY IN MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR  
FRAUD SCHEME**

St. Louis, MO: A father and son real estate development team admitted in federal court today to a bank fraud scheme relating to their business, Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey B. Jensen announced today.

According to the indictment and plea agreement, during 2006 and 2007, the Rickerts borrowed approximately \$5,000,000 from five local banks to refurbish high-end properties in Ladue and Town & Country. In order to obtain financing, they lied about their financial health and the likelihood that the properties would be quickly sold. The senior Rickert had a prior federal fraud conviction in 2002.

**GARY RICKERT, SR.** and **BRIAN RICKERT** of Creve Coeur, admitted to submitting phony financial documents and tax information to their lenders in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344. Brian Rickert also admitted to a money laundering charge relating to his use of the proceeds of the bank fraud. The Rickerts also agreed to forfeit property they purchased with the proceeds of the crime - including an automobile and jewelry. They appeared before United States District Judge Carol E. Jackson.

The Rickerts now face a maximum penalty of thirty years in prison and/or a one million dollar fine for bank fraud and up to ten years in prison and/or a \$250,000 fine for money laundering. Sentencing has been set for February 2, 2010.

"This case would not have been possible without long hours of work by the investigators and the professional cooperation of the victim-lenders. Rooting out this kind of financial misconduct protects the credit markets and has an important deterrent effect on businesspeople who may be inclined to cut corners."

"Bank fraud, like all financial crimes, adds to the underground economy, erodes the integrity of our tax system and threatens the financial health of our communities," said Toni Weirauch, Special Agent in Charge of IRS-Criminal Investigation.

Jensen commended the work of the United States Secret Service, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation and Assistant United States Attorney Tom Albus, who is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.