



**Waukesha Police Department  
Media Release**

**The Stage Off Main, Fire Investigation Conviction**

**02/28/2020**

On March 25, 2017 the Waukesha Fire Department responded to a report of a fire at a building located at 854 Martin Street, Waukesha, WI. Occupants of the upper level apartment who were home, noticed smoke inside their unit and called 911. This building was occupied by the bar named "The Stage Off Main", as well as an occupied apartment, both of which were owned and operated by Brian Lee Whitton. After the fire was suppressed an investigation was jointly conducted by the Waukesha Fire and Police Departments. As the investigation grew, agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined this investigation.

As a result of this extensive investigation which resulted in several search warrants being executed, laboratory tests conducted, and witness interviews, this case was forwarded to the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Wisconsin. The US Attorney's Office was able to secure a grand jury indictment against Brian L. Whitton for several offenses related to this incident.

On February 27, 2020, Whitton was convicted of all 5 counts: Count One: Arson of a Commercial Building; Counts Two and Three: Mail Fraud, Count Four: Use of Fire to Commit Another Felony Offense, and Count Five: Lying to a Federal Law Enforcement Officer.

Brian L. Whitton was remanded into custody immediately while he waits for sentencing on May 8, 2020. The mandatory minimum he will serve is 15 years in prison.

The Waukesha Community is grateful for the extensive time and hard work by the BATFE and the United States Attorney's Office.

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