

# Man Receives 70 Months For Trafficking Meth To Fairview Heights

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ST. LOUIS – The U.S. District Court in East St. Louis announced today that a man from Arkansas was sentenced to 70 months in federal prison Wednesday after he admitted to transporting 11 pounds of crystal methamphetamine to Fairview Heights. Leonardo A. Hernandez, 50, of Bentonville, Arkansas, pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance.

In addition to the prison sentence, he will serve two years of supervised release. Co-defendant Luis A. Aguilar-Caldera, 31, of Chula Vista, California, pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance and was sentenced to 70 months imprisonment on April 12, 2023.

After serving his sentence, he will be placed on supervised release for two years.

“Out-of-state drug dealers frequent southern Illinois roadways to execute plans for distribution across the country,” said U.S. Attorney Rachelle Aud Crowe. “DEA plays a critical role to help disband criminal drug rings, and I thank the agents who worked this case.”

According to court documents, a confidential informant working with the DEA set up a controlled purchase of methamphetamine from a Mexico-based supplier in May 2021. The individual met two men in a Ford F-150 at the Flying J truck stop in Alorton, Illinois.

Hernandez was driving and Aguilar-Caldera was the passenger in the truck that was pulling a lawn mower on a trailer. The men told the confidential source there were 11 pounds of methamphetamine located in the tires of the lawn mower.

As the Ford F-150 and the confidential source were driving to a mechanic shop to remove the tires and retrieve the drugs, DEA agents conducted a traffic stop in Fairview Heights and arrested the men in the truck. The Drug Enforcement Administration led the investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Carraway prosecuted the case.