

FORMER WORKER FOUND GUILTY OF GHOST EMPLOYMENT



The former highway worker for Union County, Rick Crowder, has been found guilty of ghost employment this week. The jury, which consisted of six individuals, four of whom were women and two of whom were men, deliberated with one another for nearly 3 hours until they finally came to the verdict. After nearly 3 hours passed by, the jurors delivered their guilty verdict at the trial. Rick Crowder, who is 50 years old, will receive his sentencing for the charges shortly before the afternoon on the 16th of March. After being sentenced, Crowder will face a maximum of three years in prison, along with a fine that can be as high as \$10,000. The verdict took place after information provided proved that Crowder was paid for work on January 28th, 2010 yet he was not working on that particular day. In fact, there were quite a few witnesses at the trial, which lasted for three days, who claim that Crowder was actually on a site that was owned by the former highway supervisor, Wanda Hartman, who also just so happened to be his girlfriend. An assortment of employees from the highway department testified at trial that Crowder was constantly disappearing from work throughout the day, just as soon as the construction for the Hartman's Kitchel Road house first started. The employees complained that because Crowder was nowhere to be found, they were unable to report any problems since he was their supervisor and he was simply missing in action. Crowder had been working for the county for nearly a decade, roughly over seven years, before he ended up losing his job after being indicted by a grand jury towards the ending of this year. The indictment took place after an investigation was performed by the Indiana State Police. In the meantime, Crowder ended up being charged with ghost employment on another date, the 30th of August in 2010. However, the charge ended up being dismissed because Crowder did actually use a vacation day on that particular date in August when he did not show up for work. The Detective on the case, Brent Dougherty was very pleased with the juror's decision, having decided that Crowder was guilty of ghost employment. He believes that they did a good job and made the right choice, especially since Crowder did not show up for work that day, leaving his employees to handle the work that was to be done, without having a supervisor to assist with the work or any problems that would arise. And, he was surprised at how well the entire trial went, especially since there have not been many cases on ghost employment in the state of Indiana in the past.