

# Dealer/Reports heavily redacted

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Investigators also have linked the Green Bay dealership's products to shooting rampages in 2008 at a college west of Chicago and the following year at a health club in Pittsburgh.

ATF inspectors generally check licensed firearms dealers every three to five years, but TGSCOM has drawn closer scrutiny because of its violations.

"When violations are cited, we do try to get back within a couple of years," said Mary Jo Hughes, director of industry operations at the federal agency's regional office in St. Paul, Minn., which covers firearms dealers in Wisconsin and three surrounding states.

The Press-Gazette requested TGSCOM inspection reports under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act after Thompson appeared before the Green Bay Plan Commission in December to get a permit allowing retail sales at the business.

At that time, he told panel members he was one of the biggest firearms dealers in the Midwest, with sales in

the tens of millions of dollars.

TGSCOM, also known as The Gun Source,

began operations in Arizona and continued there for several years before relocating to Green Bay in 2006.

"TGSCOM is constantly expanding the number and type of websites they operate to reach new clientele and generate more sales," an ATF inspector noted in November 2007.

Among the information redacted from the records: how many firearms the dealership has sold, how many guns are maintained on inventory and who supplies the business with its products.

Hughes said information is withheld when officials determine it is proprietary to a private business or if federal law restricts how much can be disclosed about inspection results.

The 2007 report lists three violations — with descriptions redacted — and elsewhere cites "weaknesses within



Thompson

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TGSCOM's internal controls." The report also notes that Thompson was "informed of the need to maintain accurate records."

ATF returned in January 2009 and reported finding six new violations, as well as other instances of "weaknesses" in the business. The report indicates that TGSCOM moved quickly to resolve all federal violations that were uncovered.

Inspectors, however, also discovered in 2009 that the Green Bay dealership was improperly engaging in retail sales rather than just Internet sales.

That issue was referred to Green Bay city officials because zoning for the Broadway business prohibited retail sales. City officials eventually agreed to authorize retail sales after quizzing Thompson about his business.

Paul Neumeyer, the city's senior planner and

zoning administrator, said officials were not aware that TGSCOM had a history of ATF violations. The city relied on the ATF to provide any necessary information, Neumeyer said.

Any serious infractions would be worth reviewing, Neumeyer said, although he questioned whether most federal inspection results would be relevant to a city zoning review.

"We're not judging someone's character," he said. "We're judging whether they're compatible with the community."