

Illinois man pleads guilty after voting twice in two federal elections CLIP OF THIS

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Illinois man pleads guilty after voting twice in two federal elections

Media executive voted in both Illinois and Colorado

The Associated Press
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BENTON, Ill. -- A Mount Vernon radio station owner has pleaded guilty after admitting to voting twice in each of the last two federal elections.

Russell Withers Jr., 65, who owns five television stations and 21 radio stations nationwide, pleaded guilty Tuesday in U.S. District Court to a violation of voting law and was fined \$10,000.

He admitted to casting ballots in his hometown in Colorado and also in Mount Vernon. **Illinois man pleads guilty after voting twice in two federal elections**

Withers, through his company, Withers Broadcasting Co. of Illinois, owns WMIX (94.1 FM) in Mount Vernon, about 75 miles east of St. Louis.

His principal residence is Grand Junction, Colo., near one of his TV stations.

Withers cast ballots in both those cities in 1998 and 2000, voting by absentee ballot in Illinois and in person in Colorado, according to court documents.

Authorities won't say how they discovered the violation, although Colorado authorities disclosed last year that they had turned an investigation over to authorities in Illinois.

Because it's a misdemeanor, the guilty plea won't affect his broadcasting licenses, officials said.

A woman who answered Withers' phone at his Mount Vernon residence said he was "on the ocean in a boat" and could not be reached. She declined to be identified.

People at the radio station declined comment.

Withers' attorney, Scott C. Helmholtz, of Springfield, issued a statement that emphasized the charge is a misdemeanor.

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