



The United States Attorney's Office

## Central District of California

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Release No. 11-051

April 6, 2011

### **SAN FERNANDO VALLEY MAN CONVICTED OF ILLEGALLY STORING TOXIC AND EXPLOSIVE HAZARDOUS WASTE IN HIS BACKYARD**

**LOS ANGELES** – A Reseda man has been found guilty of illegally storing toxic and explosive hazardous wastes in the backyard, materials that posed in imminent danger to nearby residents.

Edward Wyman, 64, was convicted of the felony environmental crime late yesterday by a federal jury following a five-day trial. In addition to convicting Wyman of violating the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the jury made a special finding that the defendant's conduct knowingly placed another person in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury.

As a result of the jury's verdicts, Wyman faces a statutory maximum sentence of 15 years in federal prison. Wyman is scheduled to be sentenced on July 11 by United States District Judge George H. King.

Wyman was charged in June 2009, soon after firefighters responded to a report of a fire and explosions at Wyman's residence. Because of the ammunition that was being "cooked off" in the fire, firefighters had to wear bullet proof vests. Investigators at the scene discovered a large cache of toxic materials, such as thousands of rounds of corroded ammunition, lead-contaminated waste from shooting ranges, hundreds of pounds of decades-old gunpowder and military M6 cannon powder, and industrial solvents that contained 1,1,1-trichloroethane and tetrachloroethylene, two potent chemicals that are listed as hazardous substances under federal law. Wyman did not have a permit to store any of the materials.

"The defendant's illegal storage practices threatened the lives and safety of his neighbors," said Nick Torres, Special Agent in Charge of EPA's Office of Criminal Enforcement in California. "The guilty verdict shows that anyone who puts the public and the environment at risk by refusing to comply with the law will be held accountable."

This case is the result of an investigation by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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