



Department of Justice

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Spokane Man Sentenced to Prison for Hazardous Waste Violations

Had DEA contracts to clean meth labs, stored waste from cleanups illegally

WASHINGTON—Robert Wayne Webb was sentenced today to one year and one day in prison by Judge Edward Lodge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho for knowingly storing hazardous waste without first obtaining a permit at a storage facility in Rathdrum, Idaho, and a private residence in Spokane, Wash., the Justice Department announced. Webb also was sentenced to pay \$71,246.79 in restitution, serve three years of supervised release, perform 120 hours community service and pay a \$200 special assessment.

Webb pleaded guilty on Sept. 29, 2008, to two counts of violating the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which governs the handling and storage of hazardous materials.

The case arose out of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) investigation of Webb's corporation Alliance Environmental Inc., which performed methamphetamine laboratory cleanups throughout the Pacific Northwest under various Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) contracts. Webb failed to properly store the wastes accumulated from the lab cleanups, instead storing them at an unpermitted facility. DEA alerted the EPA after discovering the illegal storage through an audit of their cleanup contracts.

The EPA investigation led to the discovery of an additional 71 containers of hazardous waste inside a garage in Spokane. The waste had been stored at the property for at least three years. No security measures were taken to reduce the risk that the stored containers of hazardous waste could be accessed by the general public and neighboring property owners.

"Robert Webb violated public trust and federal law by signing federal contracts to clean up busted methamphetamine labs, then illegally storing the hazardous waste without regard for human health or the environment," said Ronald J. Tenpas, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "Methamphetamine labs are dangerous to citizens' health and the environment and those responsible for cleaning them up must take the proper care to follow all applicable laws or they will be prosecuted and held accountable."

U.S. Attorney Thomas E. Moss commended the EPA agents and prosecutors who handled the case. He said, "This goes beyond fraud; this case involves recklessness that is dangerous to the health of the community."

"When this defendant illegally stored and disposed of hazardous waste from methamphetamine labs, he risked harm to the public and the environment," said Acting Special Agent in Charge Tyler Amon. "If you 'cut corners' and break the law, you will be prosecuted."

The case was investigated by the EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nancy Cook and Senior Trial Attorney J. Ronald Sutcliffe of the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section.

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