

NEWS

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Owner of Monmouth County Landscaping Business
Admits Evading More Than \$300,000 in Federal Taxes

(More)

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NEWARK - The owner of a large landscaping and contracting business in Monmouth County has pleaded guilty to tax evasion, admitting that he evaded more than \$300,000 in federal income taxes, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Christopher M. Aldarelli, Sr., 40, of Howell Township, appeared Friday before U.S. District Court Judge Stanley R. Chesler and entered a guilty plea to Count Two of an Indictment which charged him with willful tax evasion for calendar year 1999. He also admitted evading taxes for other years.

Aldarelli was arrested in February on an Indictment charging him with three counts of tax evasion for calendar years 1998, 1999 and 2000. Judge Chesler scheduled sentencing for Sept. 13.

The count to which Aldarelli pleaded guilty carries a statutory maximum penalty of five years in prison and a fine of \$100,000. The remaining counts will be dismissed; however, all of the conduct (known as relevant conduct) described in the Indictment will be taken into consideration when Judge Chesler imposes sentence.

The Indictment sets forth that from 1998 through 2000, Aldarelli ran two corporations, Aldo 1 Landscaping & Lawn Service, Incorporated and Aldarelli Enterprises, Incorporated, which performed a large volume of paving, construction, high-end landscaping and lawn-cutting work for both private residences and municipalities. Aldarelli admitted during his guilty plea that because these businesses were "S" corporations, he was required to report any income derived from the businesses on his U.S. Individual Tax Return. The Indictment further set forth that for the three years in question, Aldarelli reported that he owed tax in the amount of just under \$15,000 for the three years combined.

For calendar year 1999, Aldarelli reported taxable income in the amount of \$66,232 with a resulting tax in the amount of \$12,121. During his guilty plea, Aldarelli admitted that he intentionally failed to include an additional amount of nearly \$300,000 in personal income he received during 1999 on that tax return in an effort to evade paying income taxes. He also admitted that for calendar years 1998, 1999 and 2000, he owed an additional total tax of approximately \$317,000 on the basis of income he failed to report.

Aldarelli admitted that this additional income stemmed from the receipt of cash for work his companies performed which he did not report, as well as from cash he withdrew from business accounts but used for personal expenses. He also admitted to writing checks to himself from the business accounts which he used for personal and non-business-related expenses.

The guilty plea of Aldarelli represents the latest conviction to arise from Operation Bid

Rig, the same investigation which has led to charges being filed against more than 18 officials in Monmouth and Ocean Counties over the last several years, including convictions of the former mayors of Asbury Park, Ocean Township, West Long Branch, Brick Township, Hazlet and Keyport.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Chesler will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide an appropriate sentencing range that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by the guidelines and can impose a sentence within, above or below the range recommended under the guidelines.

Christie credited Special Agents of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord; and Special Agents of the FBI's Red Bank Resident Agency, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Pedro Ruiz, in Newark, for their work in the investigation of Aldarelli.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark J. McCarren, the Chief of the Public Protection Unit.

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Defense Counsel: Steven D. Altman, Esq., New Brunswick