



Department of Justice

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LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY FUGITIVE INDICTED FOR ALLEGEDLY EMBEZZLING \$8.7 MILLION FROM CINCINNATI-BASED SOFT DRINK BOTTLER

CINCINNATI – A federal grand jury here has returned a 75-count indictment charging James T. Hammes, 47, Lexington, Kentucky with wire fraud and money laundering for allegedly embezzling approximately \$8,711,282.42 from G&J Pepsi-Cola Bottlers, Inc. between 1998 and February, 2009 when he was employed as the controller for the bottling company's southern division. Hammes fled after he was initially charged by a criminal complaint in February, 2009.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), announced the indictment returned yesterday.

As controller for the Cincinnati-based bottling company's southern division, Hammes was responsible for all financial accounting and internal controls. The indictment alleges that Hammes created an unauthorized bank account in the name of one of the company's vendors. Hammes allegedly created an unauthorized accounts payable for the vendor from which checks were disbursed and deposited the payments into the unauthorized bank account. From there, he transferred the stolen money into his personal bank and brokerage accounts.

The indictment charges Hammes with 38 counts of wire fraud and 37 counts of money laundering. It also seeks forfeiture of the contents of his bank and brokerage accounts, and his financial interest in his house in Lexington.

"The indictment specifies 38 separate transactions totaling \$3,781,847.80 that occurred between December 22, 2006 and February 18, 2009 in which he is accused of wiring money into his personal accounts," Lockhart said, noting that wire fraud is punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment and money laundering carries a penalty of up to ten years imprisonment.

Hammes was initially charged in a criminal complaint in February, 2009 and fled after the charges were filed. He remains at large. "Anyone with information on the current whereabouts of Mr. Hammes is asked to contact their nearest FBI office," Bennett said.

Lockhart commended the FBI agents who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Barry, who is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation. A defendant should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

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