



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FEDERAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
TAKE JOINT ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST RETAILERS  
WHO ILLEGALLY REPRODUCE AND SELL MOVIES AND MUSIC**

United States Attorney Paul A. Murphy, Virgin Islands Attorney General Vincent Frazer, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agent in Charge Luis Fraticelli, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Acting Special Agent in Charge Roberto Escobar, Virgin Islands Acting Police Commissioner Novelle Francis and U.S. Marshall James Sullivan announced today that on July 15, 2009, search warrants were executed on retail outlets on St. Croix that illegally reproduce and distribute copyrighted movies and music in a joint operation to stop the sale of pirated DVDs.

During the search, officers seized tens of thousands of copies of pirated DVDs as well as several laptop computers and other equipment used to illegally reproduce the copyrighted movies and music.

The joint operation was initiated after the St. Croix offices of the FBI and ICE started receiving complaints from the public regarding the sale of pirated DVDs in front of the K-Mart building in Sunny Isle Shopping Center, as well as in gas stations and convenience stores

throughout the island. As a result of the citizen complaints, law enforcement officers identified several businesses as engaging in the sale of pirated DVDs to the public.

The affidavit in support of the search warrants states that pirated DVDs were observed at the following locations: Tide Village Gas Station, located at 75 Estate Boetzberg, Christiansted; Nigel's 1,2,3, located at Golden Rock Shopping Center, Christiansted; Budget Service Station, located at 8 Golden Rock, Christiansted; Everybody's Service Station, located at 35A La Grande Princesse; Nigel's 1,2,3, located at 27A Sunny Isle; Catherine's Rest Grocery Store; Bentick's Liquor Store, located at 18 Company Street, Christiansted; King Street Market, located at 51 King Street, Frederiksted; Choice Service Station, located at 2 & 4 Estate Mountain, Frederiksted; Five Corners Service Station, located at 1-C Little Princesse, Christiansted; Seven Days Service Station, located at 350 Mount Pleasant, Frederiksted; Eagle Mini Mart - 34A King Street, Frederiksted; Lower Love Service Station, located at 31A Lower Love, Frederiksted; and W1R Supermarket, Mon Bijou Road.

The investigative officers were able to determine whether the DVDs were pirated based on whether they possessed one or all of the following qualities: (a) the packaging/labeling of the product was not consistent with the packaging of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA); (b) the labeling of the DVD itself is not consistent with the labeling of MPAA members in that they (1) lack titles or merely display a handwritten title, (2) lack MPAA member logos or region identifiers, and (3) lack quality artwork consistent with MPAA packaging and labeling; (c) the DVDs were burned on DVD-R formatted DVDs which is not consistent with the authorized replication done by MPAA members.

For-profit copyright infringement carries a penalty of not more than 5 years or a fine of \$250,000 or both. In addition, any proceeds derived from copyright violations is forfeitable to the United States, and the United States is authorized to destroy or otherwise dispose of all infringing copies or phonorecords and all implements, devices or equipment used in manufacturing infringing copies or phonorecords.

“Open violations of the law undermine the community’s values and contribute to lawlessness on a broader scale, creating an environment which appears to condone unlawful activity of other types,” U.S. Attorney Murphy said. “The citizens of the Virgin Islands desire that they and their children live in a law-abiding community and not a community where individuals brazenly engage in notorious violations of the law.”

If you have information about video piracy and wish to report it, you can do so by calling the FBI at 773-7922 on St. Croix and 777-3363 on St. Thomas, and ICE at 778-6559 on St. Croix and 693-2250 on St Thomas. ICE can also be reached at (787) 729-6969.