

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Laura E. Duffy***

For Immediate Release

U. S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE COLLECTS OVER \$115.2 MILLION IN CIVIL & CRIMINAL ACTIONS IN FY 2012

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – December 7, 2012

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced today that the Southern District of California collected \$104,950,060.65 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 related to criminal and civil actions. Of this amount, \$95,597,133.47 was collected in criminal actions and \$9,352,927.18 was collected in civil actions. Additionally, the office and its agency partners collected \$10,332,438.00 in criminal and civil forfeitures. This year's total is almost four times higher than 2011 collection levels.

Nationwide, the U.S. Attorneys' offices collected \$13.1 billion in criminal and civil actions during FY 2012, more than doubling the \$6.5 billion collected in FY 2011. A portion of this amount, \$5.3 billion, was collected in shared cases in which one or more U.S. Attorneys' offices or department litigating divisions were also involved. The \$13.1 billion represents more than six times the appropriated budget of the combined 94 offices for FY 2012.

"We are pleased that the aggressive actions of our office have resulted in a significant increase in collections this year. During this time of economic recovery, these collections are more important than ever," said U.S. Attorney Laura E. Duffy. "Together with our law enforcement partners, we are dedicated to protecting the public and recovering funds for the federal treasury and for victims of federal crime. We will continue to hold accountable those who seek to profit from their illegal activities."

This past September, the Southern District of California recovered \$6,429,736 as part of the settlement with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) for damages to federal lands and for federal firefighting costs arising from the 2007 Witch Creek Fire in San Diego County. In addition to the other devastating losses in San Diego County, the Witch Creek Fire burned approximately 44,150 acres of federal land in the Cleveland National Forest in San Diego County.

The U.S. Attorneys' Offices, along with the department's litigating divisions, are responsible for enforcing and collecting civil and criminal debts owed to the U.S. and criminal debts owed to federal crime victims. Statistics indicate that the total amount collected in criminal actions totaled \$3.035 billion in restitution, criminal fines, and felony assessments. The law requires defendants to pay restitution to victims of certain federal crimes who have suffered a physical injury or financial loss. While restitution is paid directly to the victim, criminal fines and felony assessments are paid to the department's Crime Victims' Fund, which distributes the funds to state victim compensation and victim assistance programs.

The statistics also indicate that \$10.12 billion was collected by the U.S. Attorneys' offices in individually and jointly handled civil actions. The largest civil collections were from affirmative civil enforcement cases, in which the United States recovered government money lost to fraud or other misconduct or collected fines imposed on individuals and/or corporations for violations of federal health, safety, civil rights or environmental laws. In addition, civil debts were collected on behalf of several federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Internal Revenue Service, and Small Business Administration.

Additionally, the U.S. Attorneys' offices, working with partner agencies and divisions, collected \$4.389 billion in asset forfeiture actions in FY 2012. Forfeited assets are deposited into the Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund and Department of Treasury Forfeiture Fund and are used to restore funds to crime victims and for a variety of law enforcement purposes.

The \$13.16 billion collected nationwide by the U.S. Attorneys' offices for FY 2012 nearly matches the \$13.18 billion collected in FY 2010 and FY 2011 combined.

For further information, the United States Attorneys' Annual Statistical Reports can be found on the Internet at http://www.justice.gov/usao/reading_room/foiamanuals.html