



U.S. Department of Justice

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FORMER EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO DEFRAUDING SOUTH BELOIT COMPANY OUT OF ALMOST \$250,000

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and THOMAS J. KNEIR, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, today made the following announcement:

PATRICIA A. JEFFERS, (DOB: 05/11/49), 2229 Alongi Lane, Beloit, Wisconsin, pled guilty today, in federal court in Rockford, to a federal mail fraud charge arising from her scheme to defraud her former employer, Northwind Concrete Products Company (“Northwind”) of South Beloit, Illinois, out of almost \$250,000.

In pleading guilty today, Jeffers acknowledged that she had been employed as an accounts payable clerk at Northwind, from 1997 through October 2005. During the plea hearing, Jeffers admitted that from January 16, 2003, through October 6, 2005, she fraudulently caused Northwind to pay \$246,328.38 of her personal credit card expenses. Jeffers admitted that she executed this fraud by inputting her credit card bills into Northwind’s computer system as company payables. Jeffers then caused Northwind’s computer system to generate checks for all of the payables that had been input. Jeffers acknowledged that, with regard to the checks for her credit cards, she stamped the signature of Northwind’s president on the checks and then mailed the checks off to her credit card companies. Jeffers also admitted that all of the payments to her credit card companies paid her personal expenses, including gambling expenses.

The sentencing hearing for Jeffers will be conducted on June 30, 2006, at 9:00 a.m. Jeffers faces a maximum sentence of up to twenty years of imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000 or the greater of twice the gross gain or gross loss by the offense, a period of supervised release of at least two and up to three years following imprisonment, in addition to restitution ordered by the court. Her actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by the Rockford Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Scott A. Verseman.

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