



U.S. Department of Justice

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FORMER SALESMAN FOR OREGON COMPANY PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL MAIL FRAUD CHARGE

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

FRANK G. EMERSON, 60, of York, Maine, pled guilty today in federal court in Rockford to one count of mail fraud. Emerson formerly worked as a salesman for Woods Equipment Company ("Woods") of Oregon, Illinois. The mail fraud charges against Emerson stemmed from his scheme to defraud Woods in connection with travel expense reimbursements.

In pleading guilty today, Emerson admitted that he defrauded Woods by submitting false claims for business travel reimbursement. Emerson's sales territory included several states located in the northeastern portion of the United States. Woods reimbursed its salesmen for their business travel expenses. For purposes of this reimbursement, Woods required its salesmen to submit travel expense reports and receipts for expenses over \$25.

In the plea agreement that was filed with the court today, Emerson admitted that from October of 2000 through November of 2006, he submitted fraudulent travel expense reports which falsely listed expenses for hotel stays which did not occur. Emerson also admitted that he created false receipts to support his fictitious hotel stays. Emerson mailed the false travel expense reports and receipts to Woods in order to cause Woods to issue travel reimbursement checks to him. In the plea agreement, Emerson acknowledged that his fraud scheme caused a loss to Woods of \$68,000.

The mail fraud charge to which Emerson plead guilty carries a maximum potential sentence of up to 20 years in prison without parole, and a fine of up to \$250,000, as well as any restitution ordered by the court. The actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines. United States District Judge Frederick J. Kapala has set Emerson's sentencing hearing for Friday, August 28, 2009, at 2:30 p.m.

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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