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**FORMER EMPLOYEE OF OREGON, ILLINOIS COMPANY
SENTENCED TO EIGHT MONTHS IN PRISON FOR FRAUD**

ROCKFORD — A Scottsdale, Ariz., man was sentenced today to eight months in federal prison for defrauding his former employer, Woods Equipment Company, of Oregon, Ill. **Thomas P. Ackerman**, 40, worked as a sales representative for Woods from July 2002 through Dec. 7, 2006. The federal charges, which were filed on Sept. 8, 2009, alleged that Ackerman defrauded Woods by submitting false travel expense reimbursement claims.

In addition to the eight-month prison sentence, U.S. District Judge Philip G. Reinhard ordered Ackerman to serve three years of supervised release following his release from prison, the first three months of which will be served in home detention with electronic monitoring. The court also ordered Ackerman to pay \$93,000 in restitution to Woods' insurer, Traveler's Casualty & Surety Company of America, and \$68,250 in restitution to Woods.

On Feb. 17, 2011, Ackerman pleaded guilty to one count of interstate carrier fraud. In his plea agreement, Ackerman admitted that from January 2003 through November 2006, he submitted fraudulent travel expense reports to Woods. Through these fraudulent expense reports, Ackerman deceived Woods into reimbursing him for airline charges for flights he never actually took, bills for hotels he did not stay at, rental car expenses for cars he did not rent, and various other fictitious charges. To support his false travel expense reports, Ackerman created false airline itineraries, false

hotel receipts, false rental car receipts, and various other bogus documents. Ackerman sent the fraudulent travel expense reports and supporting false documents to Woods via a commercial interstate carrier.

The sentence was announced today by 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 Federal Bureau of Investigation. The FBI's Rockford office conducted the investigation.

In separate but related cases, two other employees of Woods Equipment Company were also convicted of defrauding Woods by submitting false travel expense reimbursement claims. On June 16, 2011, Ackerman's father, **Thomas G. Ackerman**, 62, also of Scottsdale, and a former sales manager of Woods, was sentenced eight months in prison for defrauding Woods. On Aug. 28, 2009, **Frank G. Emerson**, 62, of York, Maine, a former Woods salesman, was sentenced to four years probation for his fraud against Woods.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott A. Verseman.

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