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News Release

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St. Paul man pleads guilty to possessing with intent to distribute methamphetamine

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court in St. Paul, a 40-year-old St. Paul man pleaded guilty to possessing with intent to distribute more than 500 grams of methamphetamine. Jose Arcadio Guillen Tapia pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute the illegal drug. Tapia, who was indicted on December 21, 2010, entered his plea before United States District Court Judge Donovan W. Frank.

In his plea agreement, Tapia admitted that on November 22, 2010, he possessed the methamphetamine, which was sent to him from California. According to documents filed with the court in this case, on November 20, 2010, a manager at the United Parcel Service's ("UPS") sorting station at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport notified law enforcement about a suspicious package that had arrived from California. Authorities responded, and after a drug-sniffing dog positively alerted to the package, they applied for and received a search warrant to open the package. Inside, they found 1.43 pounds of methamphetamine.

As a result, on November 22, investigators made a controlled delivery of the package to Tapia at the St. Paul residence listed on the address label. About 15 minutes later, authorities executed a search warrant at that residence. Tapia and another man attempted to flee out the back door but were apprehended. The methamphetamine was found behind the washer and dryer. Officers also discovered inside Tapia's wallet a business card for the California company from which the package was mailed.

For his crime, Tapia faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison. Judge Frank will determine his sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Police Department, the Ramsey County Drug Task Force, the St. Paul Police Department, and

the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Dees.

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