

Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS
PHONE: (716) 843-5817
FAX: (716) 551-3051

ONTARIO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRING TO IMPORT PRESCRIPTION DRUGS INTO THE UNITED STATES

BUFFALO, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Joseph Julien, 67, of Ridgeway, Ontario, pleaded guilty to conspiring to import OxyContin from Canada into the Buffalo area before Chief U.S. District Judge William Skretny. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$1,000,000 or both.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael L. McCabe, who is handling the case, Julien was originally arrested on October 12, 2011, following a long-term investigation into the illegal importation of prescription drugs from Canada into the United States. On that date, the defendant delivered 125 OxyContin tablets to Kevin Hince, 23, of Lancaster, N.Y., at a parking lot on Broadway in Depew. Julien had illegally imported these tablets into the United States over the Peace Bridge earlier in the day. Julien had previously imported and delivered OxyContin tablets to Hince on multiple occasions. Hince in turn resold these OxyContin tablets to others in the Western New York area.

Hince pleaded guilty before Judge Skretny on April 4, 2012 and is scheduled to be sentenced on July 27, 2012.

“This case demonstrates one of the ways that prescription pills can be trafficked illegally in our area,” stated U.S. Attorney Hochul. “Unfortunately, we have also seen instances where the pills come right from the home medicine cabinet. For this reason, on Saturday, April 28, all of us in law enforcement are asking residents to please check on their prescription pills. If they are no longer needed, or if the prescription has expired, please take the next step and bring them to one of the available prescription pill drop off areas.”

The plea was the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Wilbert L. Plummer, Acting Special Agent in Charge, New York Field Division.

Sentencing is scheduled for August 13, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. before Judge Skretny.

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