



Department of Justice

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EXECUTIVES OF IOWA-READY MIX CONCRETE COMPANIES SENTENCED TO SERVE PRISON SENTENCES FOR PRICE FIXING AND BID RIGGING

Executive Sentenced to 48 Months for Violating Antitrust Laws

WASHINGTON — Two Iowa ready-mix concrete executives were sentenced to serve jail time and pay criminal fines for their participation in separate conspiracies to fix prices and rig bids for sales of ready-mix concrete, the Department of Justice announced today.

Steven Keith VandeBrake, the former sales manager of an Iowa ready-mix concrete company, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Mark Bennett to serve 48 months in prison and to pay a \$829,715.85 criminal fine for his participation in three separate conspiracies with three different companies involving agreements to fix prices and/or to rig bids for ready-mix concrete sold in Iowa. VandeBrake pleaded guilty on May 4, 2010, to the three-count felony charge filed in U.S. District Court in Sioux City, Iowa.

Additionally, Kent Robert Stewart, the president of another Iowa ready-mix concrete company, was sentenced by Judge Bennett to serve a year and a day in prison and to pay a \$83,427.09 criminal fine for his role in conspiring with VandeBrake to fix prices and rig bids for the sale of ready-mix concrete sold in Iowa. Stewart pleaded guilty on May 24, 2010, to the one-count felony charge filed in U.S. District Court in Sioux City.

Ready-mix concrete is a product whose ingredients include cement, aggregate (sand and gravel), water and other additives. The concrete generally is produced in a concrete plant and is transported to work sites by concrete-mixer trucks where it is used in various types of construction projects, including buildings and roads.

Today's sentencings are the result of an ongoing federal antitrust investigation of the ready-mix concrete industry in Iowa and its surrounding states. The investigation is being conducted by the Antitrust Division's Chicago Field Office, the FBI's Sioux City Resident Agency and the Department of Transportation's Office of the Inspector General, with the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Sioux City.

As a result of the investigation, three current or former ready-mix concrete executives, including VandeBrake and Stewart, have pleaded guilty. Chad Van Zee, the president of another Iowa ready-mix concrete company, pleaded guilty to a one-count felony charge on Dec. 6, 2010. According to court documents, Van Zee participated in a conspiracy with VandeBrake to fix prices of ready-mix concrete sold in Iowa. Van Zee is awaiting sentencing.

Anyone with information concerning bid rigging, price fixing or territorial allocation related to the ready-mix concrete industry in Iowa and its surrounding states should contact the Antitrust Division's Chicago Field Office at 312-353-7530 or visit www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.htm.

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