



Department of Justice

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FORMER EXECUTIVE OF CALIFORNIA AFTERMARKET AUTO LIGHTS DISTRIBUTOR AGREES TO PLEAD GUILTY IN PRICE-FIXING CONSPIRACY

WASHINGTON – A former executive of a California aftermarket auto lights distributor has agreed to plead guilty for his participation in a global conspiracy to fix the prices of aftermarket auto lights, the Department of Justice announced today. Aftermarket auto lights are incorporated into an automobile after its original sale, often as repairs following a collision or as accessories and upgrades.

According to a one-count felony charge filed today in U.S. District Court in San Francisco, Chien Chung Chen, aka Andrew Chen, conspired with others to suppress and eliminate competition by fixing the prices of aftermarket auto lights. The department said that Chen, a former executive vice president of a U.S. distributor for a Taiwan producer of aftermarket auto lights, participated in the conspiracy from as early as September 2003 until in or about September 2005.

According to the charge, Chen and co-conspirators participated in a conspiracy in which the participants met and agreed to charge prices of aftermarket auto lights at certain predetermined levels. According to the court document, the participants in the conspiracy issued price announcements and price lists in accordance with the agreements reached, and collected and exchanged information on prices and sales of aftermarket auto lights for the purpose of monitoring and enforcing adherence to the agreed-upon prices. The department said that the conspirators met in Taiwan, the United States and elsewhere for their discussions. The plea agreement is subject to court approval.

Chen is the second individual to be charged in connection with the aftermarket auto lights investigation. On Feb. 8, 2011, the department charged Polo Shu-Sheng Hsu for his participation in the aftermarket auto lights price-fixing conspiracy.

Chen is charged with violating the Sherman Act, which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$1 million criminal fine for individuals. The maximum fine may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victims, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine.

This case is part of an ongoing investigation of the Antitrust Division's San Francisco Office and the FBI in San Francisco. Anyone with information concerning illegal or anticompetitive conduct in the aftermarket auto lights industry is urged to call the Antitrust

Division's San Francisco Field Office at 415-436-6660 or visit www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html.

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