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News Release

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Jury convicts Minnetonka man on conspiracy, tax evasion charges

On June 17, a federal jury convicted Amit Yitzhak Sela, 52, Minnetonka, on one count of conspiracy, one count of tax evasion and two counts of filing false tax returns. He was acquitted of fraud and other tax counts following an eight-day trial.

A second defendant, Abdulla S. Noaman, Jr., 44, Shakopee, was also acquitted on one count of conspiracy. Both men were indicted on Aug. 5, 2008.

According to the indictment and court testimony, from September 2001 through September 2004, Sela knowingly and intentionally devised and executed a scheme to defraud the United States by impeding, impairing, obstructing and defeating the lawful functions of the Internal Revenue Service by impairing and obstructing the collection of income taxes.

Amit Sela was a 50 percent owner of Sela Roofing, which hired subcontractors to perform remodeling and repair work for its customers. The subcontractors billed Sela Roofing for their work and identified on their invoices the address of the job site where the work was performed.

The object of the conspiracy was to conceal the money Sela took from the business from the IRS and the Minnesota Department of Revenue in order to evade taxes on the illegally obtained income.

Sela arranged for Sela Roofing to pay for many of his personal expenses. Sela contracted with vendors who did work for him personally rather than as subcontractors for the company. He also induced the vendors to falsify the addresses on the invoices to make it appear that the work was done for a Sela Roofing job, when in fact, the work was done for Amit Sela personally. Sela then arranged for the company to pay these invoices. In some instances where he did not obtain a false invoice, Sela altered invoices.

Sela faces a potential maximum penalty of five years in prison on the conspiracy count; five years on the tax evasion count; and three years on each false tax return count. U.S. District Court

Judge James Rosenbaum will determine their sentences at a future date.

This case is the result of an investigation by the IRS-Criminal Investigation Division, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael L. Cheever.