



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEOSHO COMPANY PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGALLY DISTRIBUTING PESTICIDES

GREENLEAF AGREES TO PAY \$200,000 FINE

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – John F. Wood, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Neosho, Mo., company pleaded guilty in federal court today to violating federal statutes that regulate the sale and distribution of pesticides.

Greenleaf, L.L.C., which operated a facility at 13960 Palm Rd., Neosho, entered a corporate plea before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this afternoon. **Greenleaf**, represented in court today by owner Tom Smith, received broken bags and unwanted pesticides from every Wal-Mart store across the country last year.

“The large amount of pesticides involved in this criminal conduct created a significant public health hazard and a threat to the environment,” said Wood. “Wal-Mart paid more than \$2.5 million for an environmental cleanup of the site, and today’s tough penalty against **Greenleaf** should send a message to other companies that they will be held accountable to follow federal environmental laws.”

Greenleaf received large amounts of pesticides, rodenticides and other products from a Wal-Mart distribution center in Arkansas, which received them from every other Wal-Mart store across the country, from January 2007 until January 2008. By pleading guilty today, **Greenleaf** admitted that the firm distributed and sold a large number of the pesticides and rodenticide products after removing or defacing the labeling on the package. The amount of pesticides distributed in this fashion exceeded 2 million pounds.

“Altering the label increases the chance that pesticides may be used improperly, creating a risk to the public and the environment,” said Michael Burnett, Special Agent in Charge of EPA’s Criminal Investigation Division in Kansas City. “Today’s criminal plea sends a clear message that we will pursue those who disregard environmental laws.”

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act regulates the sale, distribution, and use of pesticides. It is unlawful for any person to detach, alter, deface, or destroy any labeling of products that are regulated by the statute.

Under the terms of today's plea agreement, the government and **Greenleaf** agree that \$200,000, the maximum fine that can be assessed for violating the federal statute, is appropriate. **Greenleaf** agrees to pay the fine on or before the sentencing hearing on June 23, 2009.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robyn L. McKee. It was investigated by the Environmental Protection Agency, Criminal Investigation Division, and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html