



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **IOWA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MAIL FRAUD, TRADEMARK COUNTERFEIT**

### **SOLD FAKE ROLEX WATCHES ONLINE AT EBAY**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – John F. Wood, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Council Bluffs, Iowa, man pleaded guilty in federal court today to selling fake Rolex watches on the online auction site eBay.

**Roy M. Richards**, 45, of Council Bluffs, formerly of Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. Chief District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan this morning to the charges contained in a Sept. 11, 2007, federal indictment.

**Richards** admitted that he defrauded the purchasers of purported Rolex watches that he was selling on eBay. **Richards** sold the watches for less than their retail value and demanded that purchasers provide payment before receiving the watches. After he received payment, **Richards** sent the purchaser a counterfeit Rolex watch with little or no value, and in some cases did not send anything.

**Richards** offered various makes and models of Rolex watches for sale on eBay in 2005. **Richards** claimed that he had purchased the contents of a storage locker that belonged to a jeweler who either died or defaulted on his lease agreement, and that inside the locker was a crate containing several Rolex watches. He also claimed that the watches

had been authenticated by three separate jewelers. The items offered by **Richards** were typically sold for less than half of the retail cost, which could be tens of thousands of dollars.

**Richards** admitted to defrauding victims in Tuscon, Ariz., Gilbert, Ariz., Honolulu, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and other locations across the United States. Most of those victims lost several thousand dollars apiece, with total losses of approximately \$35,000.

Under federal statutes, **Richards** is subject to a sentence of up to 70 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1 million. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Curt Bohling. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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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](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html)