

**United States Attorney Joseph P. Russoniello**

**Northern District of California**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE      CONTACT: JOSHUA EATON  
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**Former City of Sonoma Water Department Supervisor Indicted in Kickback Scheme**

SAN FRANCISCO – United States Attorney Joseph P. Russoniello announced that a federal grand jury in San Francisco indicted Randall Cover, of Rohnert Park, yesterday with mail fraud stemming from a multi-year kickback scheme with a parts vendor in Novato who entered into numerous contracts with the City of Sonoma.

According to the indictment, Mr. Cover, 46, was a long-time employee of the City of Sonoma, whose job title from 2000-2007 was "Water Operations Supervisor." One of Cover's job responsibilities as Water Operations Supervisor was to negotiate contracts with vendors for parts that were needed for various capital improvement projects undertaken by the City. Mr. Cover is alleged to have steered Sonoma City contracts to a Novato parts vendor, Underground Express, in exchange for receiving kickbacks from Underground Express. Mr. Cover is alleged to have received approximately \$102,795 from Underground Express for steering Sonoma city contracts to Underground Express.

Additionally, according to the indictment, Mr. Cover undermined the competitive bidding process for city contracts by providing Underground Express with pricing information so that Underground Express would consistently submit low bids and thereby receive the City's business for parts contracts originating in the City's Water Department.

Mr. Cover is scheduled to make his initial appearance in federal court in San Francisco on November 13, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. for an arraignment and setting of bail before United States Magistrate Judge Bernard Zimmerman.

The maximum statutory penalty for each count of mail fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1341 and 1346 is 20 years and a fine of \$250,00, plus restitution. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

Robin Harris is the Assistant U.S. Attorney who is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Jennifer Hiwa. The prosecution is the result of a 18 month investigation by the FBI and the Sonoma Police Department.

*Please note, an indictment contains only allegations against an individual and, as with all defendants, Mr. Cover must be presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*

**Further Information:**

Case #: 3:08 -cr-00772-CRB

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at [www.usdoj.gov/usao/can](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/can).

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at [www.cand.uscourts.gov](http://www.cand.uscourts.gov).

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Joshua Eaton at (415) 436-6958 or by email at [Josh.Eaton@usdoj.gov](mailto:Josh.Eaton@usdoj.gov)

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