



# The United States Attorney's Office

## District of New Hampshire

U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney  
District of New Hampshire



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### **NEW HAMPSHIRE CORPORATION SENTENCED IN COUNTERFEIT DRUG IMPORTATION CASE**

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE- United States Attorney Tom Colantuono, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bruce M. Foucart, and the Resident Agent in Charge of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Criminal Investigations Mark Dragonetti reports that a New Hampshire Company, Vee Excel Drugs & Pharmaceuticals, Inc., 15 Sutton Place, Londonderry, NH, was sentenced today on charges that it had conspired to traffic in counterfeit drugs and to introduce misbranded drugs into the United States.

On August 30, 2007 the company admitted that it conspired with an Indian corporation of the same name as well as with one of the principles, a citizen and resident of India, to ship counterfeit Cialis tablets into the United States in packages fraudulently identified as containing chlorine tablets. Cialis is a prescription drug that has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for exclusive distribution within the United States by Eli Lilly and Company.

The criminal investigation began as a result of a seizure of counterfeit Cialis tablets in Israel, which led to an Indian company named Vee Excel Drugs, and one of its principles. The matter was referred to the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Criminal Investigations (FDA). ICE and FDA conducted an undercover operation during which several thousand counterfeit Cialis tablets were shipped from India to ICE undercover agents in the United States. None of those pills had been manufactured in a facility approved by the FDA nor had there been any approved quality control procedures put in place. All purchase proceeds were made to a bank account in New Hampshire of the defendant company. All assets of the company were seized by federal agents during the course of the investigation and later forfeited. In addition to the forfeiture of more than \$40,000 in cash, a fine of \$5000 was imposed. Because the company has been administratively dissolved and is no longer conducting any business, probation was not imposed.

After the sentencing hearing today, U.S. Attorney Colantuono stated, "The shipment of counterfeit pharmaceuticals into the United States is an extraordinarily serious health risk. The importance of insuring that drugs and pharmaceuticals sold in the United States are safe cannot be overstated. Due to the outstanding work of the Special Agents from ICE and the FDA, in this case we were successful in stopping these counterfeit pills before they could reach the marketplace. We will continue to work to insure that the pills being sold on the shelves of our pharmacies are genuine, safe products that have been manufactured in approved facilities with appropriate quality control measures in place, not untested, unregulated counterfeits. And we will continue to search out and bring to justice not only individuals, but as in this case companies through which individuals operate, who illegally import counterfeit pharmaceuticals into the United States."

"Smuggling and trafficking in counterfeit goods is a serious financial related crime that affects all Americans economically, and it will not be tolerated," said Bruce M. Foucart, Special Agent in Charge of ICE's Office of Investigations in Boston. "ICE will continue to partner with all pertinent agencies to ensure these violators are brought to justice."

This case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Criminal Investigations.