



# **UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Western District of Washington

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## **SECOND MAN CHARGED WITH SCHEME TO STEAL AND USE PERSONAL INFO WITH PEER-TO-PEER FILE SHARING SOFTWARE**

### **Defendant Stole Information from Computers across the US to Commit Wire Fraud and ID Theft**

FREDERICK EUGENE WOOD, 34, of Seattle, Washington, was charged today in U.S. District Court in Seattle with a scheme to use peer-to-peer file sharing software to steal personal information and use the information to commit fraud against various retailers and banks. It is the second time a defendant has been charged in the Western District of Washington with a scheme using file sharing software to obtain personal information. WOOD will appear before Magistrate Judge Brian Tsuchida at 2:30 today, charged with wire fraud, accessing a protected computer in furtherance of fraud and aggravated identity theft.

According to the criminal complaint filed in the case, law enforcement became aware of WOOD's activities in November 2007, when a Seattle resident reported that he had been cheated when he attempted to purchase an Apple computer through an offering on Craigslist. The victim had met the seller at a local coffee shop, and was given an Apple computer box in return for his check. After the meeting the man discovered there was only a book and a glass vase in the box – no computer. Using a different email address the man set up another transaction with the same seller and alerted police. A Seattle Police officer posed as the buyer, and after WOOD was positively identified as the prior fraudulent seller, he was arrested. A computer box that contained just a book was seized

from him. In WOOD's car police found multiple fake identifications as well as a computer containing documents with personal information for more than 120 people across the country. A computer analysis revealed there were tax returns, bank statements and canceled checks on the computer from as far away as New York, Massachusetts, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Iowa, Louisiana, Oregon and California. The analysis also revealed that WOOD had used the peer-to-peer file sharing program Limewire to access the personal information stored on other people's computers. With this information, WOOD allegedly made forged checks which he used to make various purchases, including buying high value electronics items. Some of these items were later sold on Craigslist.

Through the investigation, authorities learned WOOD was an associate of Gregory Kopiloff. Kopiloff was sentenced in March 2008, to 51 months in prison for Mail Fraud, Accessing a Protected Computer without Authorization to Further Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft. Kopiloff admitted using file sharing programs to steal other people's personal identifying information off of their computers, and using it to commit fraud.

The charges contained in the complaint are only allegations. A person is presumed innocent unless and until he or she is proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Wire Fraud is punishable by up to 20 years in prison, and a \$250,000 fine. Accessing a Protected Computer without Authorization to Further Fraud is punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. A conviction for Aggravated Identity Theft mandates a two year prison sentence to run consecutive to the prison time imposed on the underlying conviction.

The case was investigated by the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General (SSA-OIG), the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the FBI and the Seattle Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kathryn Warma of the Computer Hacking and Internet Crimes (CHIPS) Unit of the United States Attorney's Office.

For additional information please contact Emily Langlie, Public Affairs Officer for the United States Attorney's Office, at (206) 553-4110 or [Emily.Langlie@USDOJ.Gov](mailto:Emily.Langlie@USDOJ.Gov).