



# Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Texas

Tim Johnson • Acting United States Attorney

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FORMER RURAL CARRIER ASSOCIATE IMPRISONED FOR STEALING IDENTITIES FROM THE MAIL**

(HOUSTON) - Former rural carrier associate Rodney Ervin has been sentenced to prison for mail theft, access device fraud and aggravated identity theft, acting United States Attorney Tim Johnson announced today.

U.S. District Court Judge Melinda Harmon sentenced Ervin to one month imprisonment on the mail theft count, one month for the access device count to run concurrently. He will also serve a two-year mandatory statutory maximum sentence for the aggravated identity theft count, to run consecutively for a total of a 25-month sentence. Indicted on July 17, 2008, Ervin pleaded guilty on Nov. 7, 2008, admitting he stole mail containing credit cards from customers residing along Rural Route 127, delivered out of the Bear Creek Station located on Cairnway Drive in Houston.

Special Agents of the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG) initiated an investigation upon receiving a customer complaint advising use of a Chase MasterCard credit card stolen from the mail. Follow-up investigation revealed two additional Chase credit cards stolen from the mail. USPS-OIG agents determined Ervin had been assigned to the effected route when the reported mail losses had occurred. In addition, Ervin was captured and identified from video surveillance at various merchant locations using the credit cards and signing the legitimate customers' names. The customers advised they did not authorize Ervin possession or use of their credit cards and Ervin was identified as being responsible for \$2,517.52 in fraudulent charges.

Following the sentencing of another rural carrier associate in just less than two weeks, also resulting in the mandatory two-year-term, once again, the USPS reiterates: "Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States and is a serious federal offense," said Max Eamiguel, Executive Special Agent-in-Charge, USPS-OIG, Southwest Field Office. "The American public trusts the Postal Service to deliver its mail intact. When a postal employee betrays that trust and steals mail, then uses stolen financial information to wreak havoc in the lives of our citizens, Special Agents of the Postal Service's Office of Inspector General investigate. Fortunately, these incidents are not common and the overwhelming majority of the 700,000 postal employees are honest and hard working. With the prosecutive support of the United States Attorney's Office, we will aggressively pursue any employee committing a postal crime."

Ervin began his employment with the United States Postal Service as a rural carrier associate on Aug. 28, 1999. His employment has since been terminated.

Ervin will be allowed to self-surrender to the Bureau of Prisons on within 45 days. In addition to the 25 months sentence plus the mandatory two-year prison term, Judge Melinda Harmon also imposed a two-term of supervised release to begin following his release from prison and further ordered he pay restitution to the victims in the amount of \$2,517.52.

The investigation leading to Ervin's indictment and arrest was conducted by Special Agents with USPS-OIG. The case was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Tammie Y. Moore.

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