



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2009
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CRM
(202) 514-2008
TDD (202) 514-1888

TWO DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY IN COUNTERFEIT PIPE COUPLING SCHEME

WASHINGTON – Hayden B. Greene, 31, of Tulsa, Okla., and James Robert Roy, 42, of Tomball, Texas, pleaded guilty today to conspiring to manufacture and sell counterfeit pipe couplings, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Tim Johnson of the Southern District of Texas.

Greene and Adams pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Keith P. Ellison in Houston to one count of conspiracy to traffic in counterfeit goods and commit fraud. They each face up to five years in prison. Sentencing is scheduled for Nov. 5, 2009.

In their plea agreements, Greene and Roy admitted that they conspired with another co-defendant in a counterfeiting scheme to manufacture and sell oilfield pipe couplings stamped with a certification mark owned and registered by the American Petroleum Institute (API), without a license or other authorization to do so.

API's certification program is a quality-control program designed to insure against injury and catastrophic loss from substandard, unsafe products. The API monogram certifies that products and equipment used in the exploration and production of petroleum and natural gas meet certain API standards, specifications and recommended practices. Couplings that do not meet the API standards are sold for limited service applications at substantially lower prices than API-certified products. Only manufacturers licensed by API after meeting strict quality control standards, and who are subject to continued monitoring by API, are authorized to manufacture and sell products containing an API certification mark.

According to the plea agreement, Greene and Roy acknowledged that they not only manufactured and sold couplings containing an API certification mark without a license, but profited at the expense of customers by manufacturing many of those couplings using substandard materials.

This case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Richard Green of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, with assistance from Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark McIntyre of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas. It is being investigated by the FBI's Houston Field Office.

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