



Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias
Northern District of Georgia

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CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

DEFENDANT CONVICTED IN METHAMPHETAMINE "SUPERLAB" CASE

Atlanta, GA - ALFREDO SANTIAGO MORENO, also known as "Chago," 35, of Tepalcatepec, Mexico, was convicted by a federal jury on charges related to the manufacturing of methamphetamine and operation of a "Superlab" that DEA seized and dismantled in February 2005 in Smyrna, Georgia. The jury convicted MORENO of all charges, including manufacturing and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, conspiring to manufacture and distribute methamphetamine, and maintaining a place or residence for the purpose of manufacturing methamphetamine.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of today's jury verdict, "The meth Superlab in Smyrna not only produced record amounts of "ice" methamphetamine -- and was poised to produce even more -- it was a danger to the community that could literally have blown up at any moment. We appreciate the jury's verdict, which brings justice to the ringleader responsible for setting up the Superlab. He will now face the very long prison sentence he deserves."

According to Nahmias and the evidence presented in court: On November 3, 2006, DEA agents arrested MORENO in a continuing investigation of the "Superlab" found at 200 Church Road in Smyrna, which was the first "Superlab" discovered in Georgia and the largest methamphetamine lab ever discovered east of the Mississippi River. The evidence showed that MORENO, an illegal alien originally from Tepalcatepec, Mexico, was the ringleader in Atlanta who obtained the residence, coordinated the purchase of materials used in the manufacturing process, and coordinated the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine "cooked" at the "Superlab" between November of 2004 and February of 2005. When DEA agents seized the lab, in addition to manufacturing equipment, chemicals, and methamphetamine in various stages of production, agents seized over 11 kilograms (24 pounds) of 94% pure crystal methamphetamine ("ice").

The evidence showed that once the agents entered the residence procured by MORENO, they immediately discovered the unusual size and capacity of the lab. In the basement of the residence, the agents found an array of equipment set up for the manufacturing of methamphetamine and reprocessing of the methamphetamine into its more potent and addictive form, ice methamphetamine.

The agents also found 24 large trash bags stuffed with emptied pseudoephedrine tablet boxes, as well as containers holding approximately 35 pounds of pure d-pseudoephedrine hydrochloride, court records show. The pure pseudoephedrine had been extracted from the tablets in the empty boxes, yielding one of the final precursors in the methamphetamine manufacturing process. The 35 pounds of pseudoephedrine seized in the basement would yield another 30 pounds of pure methamphetamine. Finally, the agents discovered five 55-gallon containers holding what a lab expert identified to be the liquid byproduct of the methamphetamine manufacturing process.

The trial started on Monday and lasted four days. The jury returned its verdict after approximately 4 hours of deliberation. MORENO's conviction carries a maximum sentence of life in prison. Sentencing for MORENO has been set for August 7, 2007, at 4 p.m. before District Court Judge Clarence Cooper.

Assistant United States Attorneys Richard Rice and John Horn are prosecuting the case.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the DEA, the U.S. Marshal's Service, the MCS (Marietta, Cobb, Smyrna) Drug Task Force, and the DeKalb County Police Department.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta recommends parents and children learn about the dangers of drugs at the following web site: www.justthinktwice.com.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.