



Department of Justice

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OHIO MAN SENTENCED FOR CRIMINAL CIVIL RIGHTS CHARGES

WASHINGTON – David Fredericy of Cleveland, Ohio, was sentenced today to serve 33 months in federal prison for conspiring to commit and for committing hate crimes targeting African-American residents of Cleveland, and for making false statements to federal investigators. During the sentencing hearing, U.S. District Judge Patricia A. Gaughan stated that she wanted to send “a message loud and clear that this conduct will not be tolerated.”

On October 26, 2006, Fredericy pleaded guilty to conspiring to interfere and interfering with the federally protected housing rights of an interracial family because of their race, and for making false statements to federal investigators. Another Cleveland resident, Joseph Kuzlik, pleaded guilty to the same charges on November 27, 2006, and is scheduled to be sentenced on February 21, 2007.

Fredericy and Kuzlik engaged in a series of acts intended to threaten and intimidate African-American residents in their neighborhood. Among other acts, the defendants placed toxic mercury on the porch of a family with children for the purpose of intimidating them because they were an interracial family. In order to keep their unlawful actions secret, both Fredericy and Kuzlik lied to federal investigators from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the federal agency that was initially charged with cleaning up the mercury and investigating the incident. Fredericy was ordered to pay restitution to the U.S. EPA and the Ohio EPA for the cost of cleanup, and was also ordered to pay restitution of a to be determined amount to individual victims who suffered financial losses as a result of the offenses.

“Any vicious act of racism is deplorable,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “What these men did is despicable, and the Justice Department will continue to vigorously prosecute those who violate the federally protected civil rights of others.”

“Today’s sentence is a fitting conclusion to a joint effort by the FBI, the U.S. EPA, the Ohio EPA, and the Cleveland Police Department, and demonstrates the commitment of both state and federal law enforcement authorities to protecting every citizen’s basic right to live in and enjoy his or her own home without fear of racial intimidation,” said Gregory White, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ann C. Rowland and Trial Attorney Kristy L. Parker of the Civil Rights Division.

Prosecuting the perpetrators of bias-motivated crimes is a top priority of the Justice Department. Since 2001, the Civil Rights Division has charged 163 defendants in 103 cases of bias-motivated crimes.

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