FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
AUSA VICKIE E. LEDUC or
MARCIA MURPHY at 410-209-4885
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LA PLATA MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN SCHEME TO SELL COUNTERFEIT VIAGRA

Baltimore, Maryland – Dwayne Alan Skiles, age 34, of LaPlata, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to conspiring to traffic in counterfeit Viagra tablets.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Postal Inspector in Charge Daniel S. Cortez of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service – Washington Division; and Special Agent in Charge Antoinette V. Henry of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations.

According to his plea agreement, from November 2009 through February 2010, Skiles conspired with Sarah Knott to traffic in pharmaceutical tablets bearing counterfeit Viagra trademarks through listings on Craigslist, email, telephone and other means. Knott advertised the product, completed sales and handled shipping. Payment for sales were sent to Skiles through Western Union.

According to Knott's plea agreement, in February 2010, an investigator for Pfizer Corporation contacted the U.S. Postal Inspection Service to report that he made undercover purchases of Viagra through a listing on Craigslist from a seller who identified herself as Knott. In December 2009, the undercover Pfizer investigator sent payment for the product to Skiles per Knott's instructions.
On January 6, 2011, a search warrant was executed at Knott's residence. Agents seized 45,684 counterfeit Viagra tablets; and electronic records showing sales of counterfeit Viagra to a number of individuals which netted $8,425. The total loss as a result of the scheme is $119,893.96, of which Skiles' share of proceeds was $2,500.

Skiles faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a $250,000 fine. As part of his plea agreement, Skiles has agreed to pay restitution of $2,500. U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz, has scheduled sentencing for December 20, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

Sarah Anne Balsley Knott, age 28, of Waldorf, Maryland, pleaded guilty to trafficking in counterfeit Viagra tablets and was sentenced to two years of probation and ordered to pay $8,425 in restitution.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the FDA, OCI for their work in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony V. Teelucksingh of the Department of Justice Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and Assistant United States Attorney Bryan E. Foreman, who prosecuted the case.

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