



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Columbia Man Pleads Guilty To Insurance Fraud

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Charles Todd Ledford, 25, of 1102 Fairwood Drive in Columbia pleaded guilty on September 6, 2005, to one (1) count of Presenting a False Claim For Payment in Excess of \$1,000, a felony violation of §38-55-170, punishable to five (5) years imprisonment and/or a fine in the discretion of the court.

On the morning of February 14, 2002, an automobile operated by Ledford caught fire in the parking lot of Eastside Motor Sports on St. Andrew's Road in Columbia. Ledford submitted an insurance claim for the fire and produced forged receipts for aftermarket parts in support of his insurance claim. Some of the receipts had inflated values for automobile parts while others were for parts not sold by the particular manufacturer appearing on the receipt(s).

An analysis of the fire indicated that it was caused by an improperly installed aftermarket turbocharger, which ignited wiring in the engine compartment. The claim was denied with no restitution due to the insurance company.

Judge Reginald I. Lloyd, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Richland County, sentenced Ledford to three (3) years imprisonment suspended upon nine (9) months probation, and a fine of \$500.

This case was investigated by the State Law Enforcement Division and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

Columbia Woman Pleads Guilty To Insurance Fraud

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Michelle Renee Meetze, 33, of 7306 Bailey Street in Columbia, pleaded guilty on September 7, 2005, to one (1) count of Presenting a False Claim For Payment in Excess of \$5,000, a felony violation of §38-55-170(1), punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment and/or a fine of \$5,000.

On May 2, 2004, Meetze participated in a staged accident as the passenger of a car allegedly involved in a hit-and-run in a parking lot. The named insured (co-defendant Angela Moffet) had placed the vehicle under coverage only three (3) days prior to the accident. Insurance investigators discovered that Meetze (and all codefendants) was involved in a similar hit and run accident just three (3) weeks earlier. Investigators also discovered that Ms. Meetze and her brother (co-defendant Michael Meetze) had thirty-six (36) prior insurance claims between them.

When the named insured was confronted with the results of the insurance company's investigation, she confessed that the accident was staged. After the confession, the insurance company denied all claims. Judge Reginald I. Lloyd, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Richland County, sentenced Meetze to five (5) years imprisonment suspended to one (1) year probation.

Both co-defendants pleaded guilty in 2004, and received five (5) years imprisonment suspended to one (1) year probation. No restitution was owed in this matter.

This case was investigated by the State Law Enforcement Division and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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